



Engagement Matters

An exploration of public engagement
and its futures in Toronto

by Lindsay Clarke, Jessica Thornton, Ayana Webb


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Submitted to OCAD University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Design in Strategic Foresight + Innovation

Toronto, Ontario, Canada, December 2018

 Lindsay Clarke, Jessica Thornton, Ayana Webb, 2018

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ABSTRACT

As public engagement gains momentum as a mechanism for engaging residents in a changing political climate, its effectiveness is more important than ever. This study, divided into three volumes, explores matters related to public engagement for city-building decisions. Volume 1 is a primer on public engagement, meant to support municipal public servants to understand the basics of public engagement. This Volume is informed by user and expert interviews, ethnographic observation, and system mapping tools conducted during the first phase of this research. Volume 2 builds on insights developed during the first phase of this research, to explore the futures of public engagement in 2033 using strategic foresight. Written for public servants familiar with the field of public engagement, Volume 2 is an exploration of key trends impacting the futures of public engagement and possible future scenarios. These scenarios were developed using a collective scenario process, which Volume 3 describes in detail, in the hopes that foresight and public engagement practitioners might find use in iterating and utilizing this process to explore participatory future-focused conversations.

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INTRODUCTION

Engagement Matters

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The notion of engaging the public in government decisions is certainly not new. However in recent years, public engagement has been propelled into the spotlight and into public discourse. Yet despite public engagement being as old as democracy itself, quite often the conversation about public engagement is how it was not done right, not done at all, or how it was done as a box ticking exercise.

Engagement Matters is a comprehensive research study examining public engagement and its future in Toronto, Canada. Using a design thinking approach, this research began by exploring the following: 'how might we define and design meaningful public engagement in city building decisions for Toronto residents?' In the process of answering this question, using data gathered from a literature review, ethnographic observations, expert and user interviews, and a series of mapping tools, it became apparent that the biggest challenge with public engagement is not the process or event itself, but the broader

system in which it exists.

As a result of this finding it became less important to define or design meaningful public engagement, and more so to elevate the understanding of public engagement beyond the current focus on the process. The focus of this exploration shifted to a new research question: 'how might we provoke new thinking about the futures of meaningful public engagement in city building decisions for Toronto public servants?' To answer this question, the research team designed a participatory scenario development process using existing strategic foresight methods, to engage Toronto residents in developing a range of possible futures of public engagement.

Given the iterative nature of this 12 month research study, Engagement Matters is organized research findings into 3 volumes.

Volume 1 serves as a primer on public engagement, written for municipal public servants with limited experience in the practice of public engagement. This volume provides an

overview of the history of public engagement, current literature, and existing public engagement frameworks. Written by applying data gathered over the course of answering the first research question, this volume is intended to build the capacity of public servants to deliver meaningful public engagement processes, by arming them with knowledge of persistent challenges and both expert- and user-recommended best practices.

Volume 2 provides an overview of the possible futures of public engagement using a strategic foresight approach. Written for public servants with some experience with public engagement, this section provides an understanding of the key trends impacting public engagement today, and presents four possible future scenarios. These scenarios are intended to provoke new thinking about public engagement, and were generated in response to answering the second research question.

Volume 3 provides a first-person account of the design and methodology of the scenario development process used during this research study. This process, referred to as collective scenarios, involves remixing established foresight tools and sequencing them in a different way. Written for experienced public engagement practitioners and participatory foresight researchers, the intent of this volume is to share the process and associated tools for use by practitioners and researchers, to invite feedback, and encourage expanded use of the process.

Together, all 3 volumes summarize the comprehensive findings uncovered from a 12 month exploration into the futures of public engagement in Toronto.

Although Toronto was the focus of this research, with the growth and frequency of public engagement seen across local governments, this work can be applied to other urban contexts.

INTRODUCTION

Engagement Matters

We live in a time of growing complexity and increasing uncertainty.

For government of all levels, managing this rising complexity requires challenging decision making on behalf of **residents**.^{*} However, this mindset is beginning to change, particularly at the municipal level where these difficult decisions impact residents' daily lives. Rather than manage on behalf of residents, governments are shifting to managing in collaboration with residents.

Engaging the public is not a new concept — public consultation or engagement has a long history in cities — but residents' expectations of how they are involved and empowered in decision making is changing for many reasons.

Trust in government continues to decline (Benay, 2018; Edelman, 2017; Zmerli & Van der Meer, 2017). **Public engagement** has long been viewed as a solution to declining trust in government, however, in its current form, it often has the opposite effect. At a recent public engagement event in Toronto, one participant remarked: "I always get concerned when I hear the word 'consult' because it feels like a checkmark" (Anonymous, 2018). Residents feel disenchanted with processes that feel disingenuous and inauthentic.

In response, there has been an increase in the number of public engagements held by government. As we write this, in Toronto alone, there are 336 open public consultations (City of Toronto, 2018). For residents, it can be difficult to know where to focus their energy — where their input will be genuinely listened to and acted upon. So, while engagement is becoming more commonplace (City of Toronto, 2013), it does not necessarily mean better or more meaningful interactions for residents.

^{*}Glossary Terms

The meaning of terms that are bold-faced are provided in the Glossary section at the end of this document.

“Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody.”

Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*

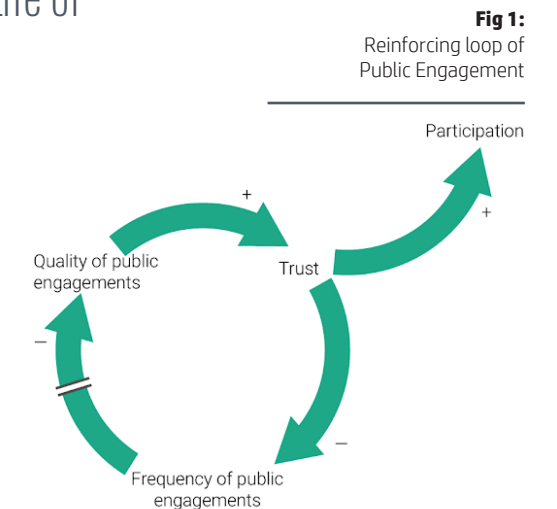
This cycle — where declining trust leads to low participation, which leads to more public engagement, which leads to residents feeling disillusioned — contributes to a widening gap between those who create policies and residents who are impacted by them. Residents feel as though their government is not responsive to their needs, wants, and values.

As the level of government with the most direct impact on residents' daily lives, local governments are uniquely positioned to change this narrative — and residents are ready for change. People expect the same transparency and responsiveness from their government as they have become accustomed to in every other aspect of life (Accenture, 2017; Chadwick, 2018; Wesley, 2018). Access to information has empowered residents to demand more from their governments and they are looking to play a more significant role in how their cities evolve.

Good governance requires effective resident participation. Many cities are responding with creative new ways to engage residents in decision making and strengthen relationships between government and residents. We believe meaningful public engagement — that effectively leverages residents' knowledge, expertise, and lived experience — can enable better informed and more resilient decisions.

In a time of increasing political polarization, cities need to find ways to build stronger relationships with residents, to strengthen the ability of communities to work together, and to collaborate with residents to create a shared vision for the future.

Using Toronto as a case study, this project aims to shed light on the current landscape of public engagement and to provide insight into the possible futures that may await.



Language Matters

Defining Public Engagement

In the literature, public engagement has been used to describe a variety of activities, methods, and processes that include citizens in public decisions. The words “public,” OR “**citizen**” AND “engagement,” “participation,” OR “consultation” appear to be used synonymously in many publications, though experts interviewed in this research have distinguished them in different ways. Within this project, only the term “public engagement” is used to describe this body of work.

The following definition of public engagement was used throughout this project:

“[Public Engagement] is a general term we are using for a broad range of methods through which members of the public become more informed about and/or influence public decisions” (Institute for Local Government, 2016).

Another important distinction in this document is the use of the term “resident” rather than “citizen.” The term “citizen” more often refers to a legal designation, while in Toronto, public engagement processes are open to all residents regardless of whether they have status as a Canadian citizen. Also important, is the distinction between public engagement and **civic engagement**, which is a broader umbrella term that includes practices such as voting and other formal interactions with government.

“Don’t [people] deserve a say in how they are governed?”

John Tory, Mayor of Toronto

“The city becomes stronger
when we plan it together.”

Growing Conversations,
Toronto City Planning Division

A Word on Toronto

In 2018, just three months before the municipal election, the Ontario government intervened and announced a reduction in the number of Toronto city councillors from 44 to 25. The move was controversial and unprecedented and brought public engagement into the spotlight. The decision was made despite a two-year process that had directly engaged 1803 Toronto residents and recommended an increase in the number of city councillors (Toronto Ward Boundary Review Advisory Council, 2016).

In making its controversial decision, the Ontario government did not undertake a comprehensive public engagement process. Despite a court challenge, the new ward boundaries imposed by the province were enacted on election day.

Now, more than ever, the City of Toronto needs to find meaningful ways to engage its residents. Growing Conversations, a project to improve engagement across the City Planning Division, has the vision to make Toronto the most engaged city in North America (City of Toronto, 2018). We believe that, in order to accomplish this vision, Toronto will need to find ways to empower residents as partners in city building. And the timing is right — with fewer city councillors each now responsible for more people and more issues — there is an opportunity for residents to play an expanded role at the community level and, ultimately, to help shape the future of the city.

“When citizens are actively involved in their civic and democratic institutions, their community and their nation are stronger, more just, and more prosperous.”

Alan Solomont, Dean Jonathan M. Tisch
College of Civic Life, Tufts University

Purpose

This project intends to provide a comprehensive understanding of the current landscape of public engagement, using Toronto as a case study, and to explore possibilities of how the concept, practice, and delivery of public engagement may change over the next fifteen years.

During our journey into the futures of public engagement, we adapted a variety of foresight tools that, when woven together, produced a variation on existing collaborative approaches to scenario generation, which became central to this project and which we hope will add value to the field of **strategic foresight**.

“I think there’s going to be an expanded role for community councils, having residents more involved in the decision-making locally, more autonomy over budgets, parks and community programming — we’re going to have a conversation with the community going forward.”

Brad Bradford, Toronto city councillor

Areas of Exploration

This project includes three distinct areas of inquiry:

Volume 1. A Primer on Public Engagement

This section provides readers with an overview of the history of public engagement, current literature, existing frameworks, as well as findings uncovered in the first phase of this research project.

This first phase began with the underlying assumption that public engagements in the city of Toronto were flawed and not meeting the needs of residents. In our professional lives, we had all been responsible for designing and leading forms of public engagement and had seen, firsthand, how poor process design could lead to stakeholder disengagement. As residents of Toronto, we had experienced the uncertainty surrounding how public input was used to inform decisions in public engagement processes.

Secondary research taught us that the mechanisms used to engage residents in policymaking for community or city building have remained mostly unchanged in the last fifty years. Public engagement, in its current form, is failing to create meaningful interactions between residents and government and, instead of upholding and strengthening democracy as it is intended to do, can lead to further erosion of trust in government (Shiple & Utz, 2012).

We set out to test our assumptions and answer the following research question with a design research approach, and by speaking with residents, academics, public servants, and practitioners.

How might we define and design meaningful public engagement in city building decisions for Toronto residents?

Define — Public engagement goes by many different labels and does not have a single definition.

Meaningful — Meaning is derived from an action-oriented and transparent process that effectively leverages residents' knowledge, expertise, and lived experience.

Public engagement — Any process in which residents are invited to participate in a formal or informal process with an organization to provide input.

City building — Entails conscious, intentional “initiatives that help communities in cities become more sustainable, integrated, inclusive, walkable, and healthy through research, education, and engagement efforts” (Ryerson City Building Institute, 2015).

Toronto residents — Any person living within the city limits of Toronto, not associated with citizenship.

In addition to the main research question, we had a number of other questions that guided our early thinking and exploration:

1. How might we design action-oriented public engagement opportunities?
2. How might we design transparent public engagement opportunities?
3. How might we improve understanding of public engagement processes for residents and government alike?

This research led to a wealth of findings, including ongoing challenges in public engagement and an extensive list of expert recommendations that, if applied, contribute to creating meaningful interactions during public engagements for residents. Finally, this exploration of public engagement led us to a number of insights that were critical to defining the direction of our project.

Volume 2. Public Engagement in 2033

This section provides readers with an understanding of the key trends impacting public engagement today and presents four possible futures for public engagement in the city of Toronto. These scenarios are intended to provoke new thinking about public engagement for public servants.

Having identified, in the first phase of our research, that much attention was being paid to improve public engagement processes and events, it became apparent that this was not where our energy was best focused. Although much can be done to improve the experience of public engagement for residents, we identified systemic barriers that preclude transformational change from taking place. This realization led us to employ strategic foresight. We hoped that, by examining possible futures of public engagement, we might help elevate the conversation beyond the design of an event or process, to provoke discussion about how public engagement could be transformed in Toronto.

How might we provoke new thinking
about the futures of meaningful public
engagement in city-building decisions
for Toronto public servants?

Volume 2 of this research was guided by the following question:

Provoke new thinking — Expand the discussion beyond public engagement events, to consider the broader engagement ecosystem, and therefore, consider new dimensions of the practice.

Futures — For the purpose of this inquiry, the horizon year is 2033.

Meaningful public engagement — Building from Volume 1, this exploration aims to consider how the derivative of meaning in public engagement processes might evolve over time.

Toronto public servants — Unelected municipal staff at the City of Toronto.

Volume 3. Collective Scenarios

This section provides readers with a first-person account of the design and methodology of the scenario development process that emerged during the course of this project. This process, which we will refer to as collective scenarios, involves remixing established foresight tools and sequencing them in a different way. The hope of sharing this evolved approach is that aspiring or experienced foresight practitioners will be inspired to iterate and improve upon it.

To develop the futures of public engagement in Toronto, it was clear that our foresight exploration would need to include impacted stakeholders — residents, public servants, and practitioners — to co-create scenarios. With public engagement as the central area of exploration, we set out to model the expert and user recommendations from the first phase of our research in our foresight process. A key component of this was to find a way to draw our stakeholders into the process. A generative foresight card game was derived from existing work (most notably, ForesightNZ Playing Cards, New Zealand Treasury, & McGuinness Institute, 2016), and played during two workshops with great success. The output of these workshops, which we refer to as micro-scenarios, became the central input for the scenarios presented in Volume 2.

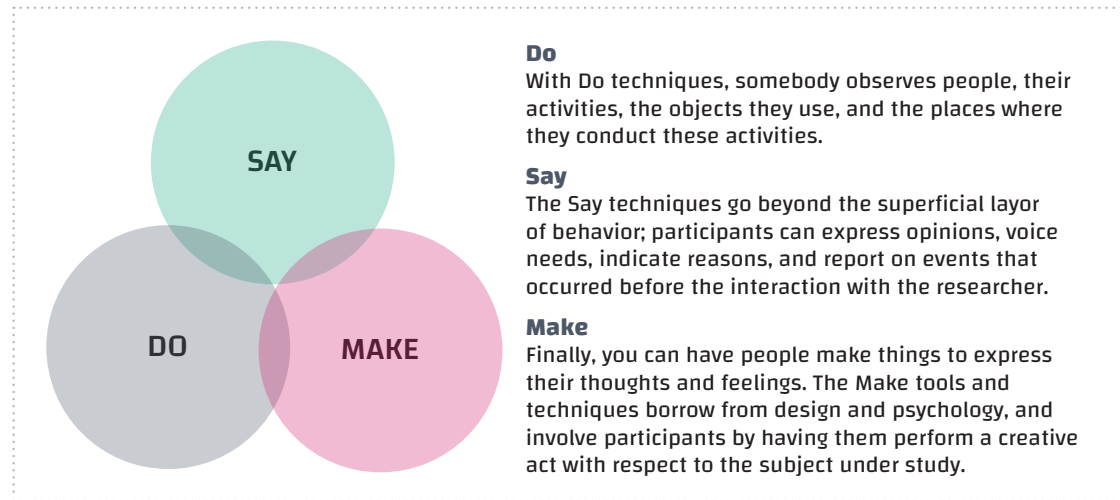
“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful citizens can change the world; indeed it’s the only thing that ever does.”

Margaret Mead, Cultural Anthropologist

METHODOLOGY

Project Methodology

Fig 2:
Say, Do, Make
(Sanders & Stappers, 2013)



This project used a combination of **design thinking, systems thinking**, and strategic foresight tools and processes. Applying these approaches together created a comprehensive understanding of the area of focus.

Parallel to the formal methodologies employed, this project aimed to model a formal public engagement process, involving participants in regular feedback loops. Including participants for their expertise and ideas throughout the process was critical to this generative participatory approach.

There are three categories of research techniques and tools that are typically found in generative research projects — Do, Say, Make (Sanders & Stappers, 2013). This grouping of research methods is people-centered and focuses on the participants' activities, rather than on the researchers.

This entire research project was an iterative process that followed the United Kingdom's Design Council **Double Diamond Model** (n.d).

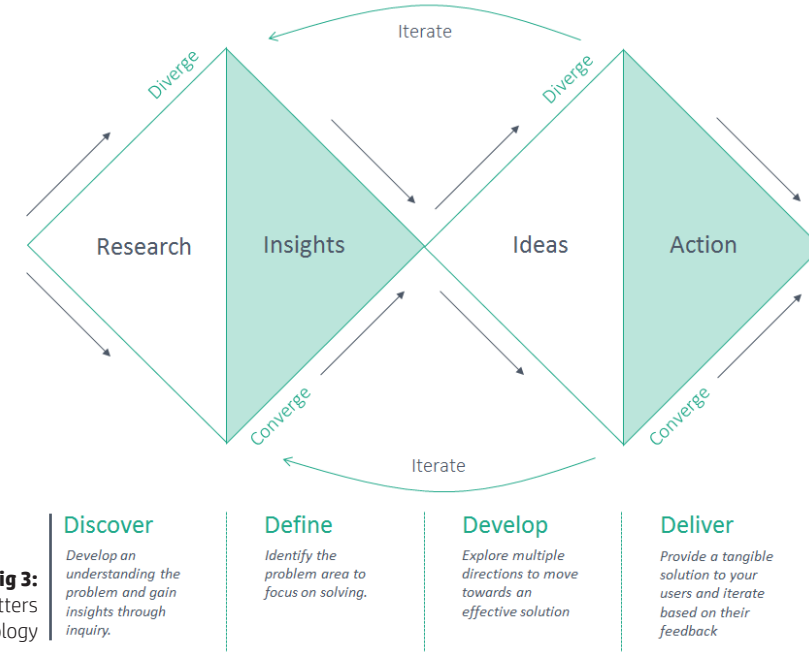


Fig 3:
Engagement Matters
Project Methodology

Phase 1 — Discover

Design research tools were employed to explore and develop an understanding of both the local and broader contexts of public engagement.

Phase 2 — Define

Findings from the first phase were synthesized and insights developed. Systems mapping created a deeper level of sensemaking and identified the need for a strategic foresight exploration of the futures of public engagement.

Phase 3 — Develop

In this phase, strategic foresight tools were applied to develop future scenarios. In this highly participatory phase, the approach to scenario development emerged organically and engaged participants to imagine possible futures of public engagement.

Phase 4 — Deliver

Participant input was blended with formal strategic foresight tools to co-create future scenarios. With the set of scenarios written, key considerations for public servants were developed.

Participatory Feedback Loops

All four phases of research were underscored by the participatory approach to this project. Feedback loops were implemented at each phase to ensure that participants had the opportunity to validate findings and confirm that output of this research represented their input.

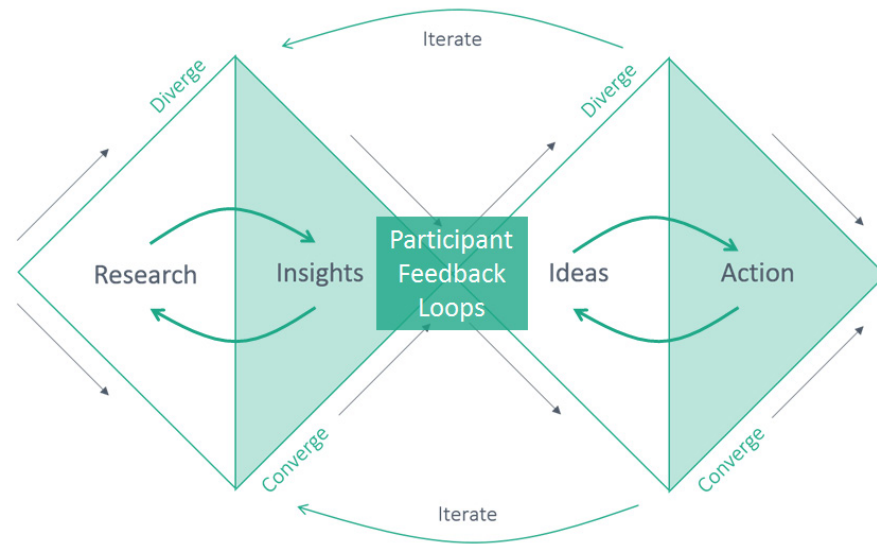


Fig 4:
Engagement Matters
Project Participant
Feedback Loops

Table 1:
Research phases and
guiding questions

Phase	Guiding Question	Research Methods		
		Do	Say	Make
Discover	What is or is not working in city building related public engagement processes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ethnographic Observation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Literature Review Expert Interviews User Interviews System Mapping Tools 	
Define	Where is the opportunity for improving city building related public engagement processes?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participant Feedback Loop System Mapping Tools 	
Develop	How will current trends impact the futures of city building related public engagement processes in 2033?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Horizon Scan Trend and Driver Analysis World Building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foresight Game Prototyping Foresight Game Workshops
Deliver	What are the futures of city building related public engagement processes in 2033?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participant Feedback Loop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scenarios

DO

Research Methods

Data for this project was collected over a six-month period. Below, each method is described in detail, including a notation of the relevant Volume where this data is represented.

Phase 1 — Discover

Ethnographic Observation

The research team observed 13 public engagement events throughout the spring of 2018 to understand how Torontonians participate in and interact with public engagement processes. To ensure observational data was gathered in a consistent way, the AEIOU framework (Hanington & Martin, 2012) was used to record **ethnographic observations**. Data from this method is used to inform sections of Volume 1.

The following is a summary of the public events observed by the research team:

Sidewalk Toronto Pubic Roundtable # 1

Sidewalk Toronto — Tuesday, March 20, 5 pm to 9 pm
Panel Discussion, Metro Toronto Convention Centre
The meeting intended to provide an overview of the project, share the vision, and provide Toronto residents with an opportunity to share their perspectives.

Sidewalk Toronto Pubic Roundtable # 2

Sidewalk Toronto — Thursday, May 3rd, 5:30 pm to 9 pm
Open House and Roundtable Discussion, Daniels Spectrum
Sidewalk Toronto shared what they heard during their first roundtable discussion, solicited feedback on their Responsible Data Use Framework, and held moderated conversations.

Public Consultation on New Dust Control Measures

City of Toronto — Tuesday, May 15, 6 pm to 8 pm
Public Meeting, North York Civic Centre
Residents were invited to give their opinion on new requirements for dust control measures the City was considering.

Resilient Toronto Part 2: Creating Inclusive, Climate-Resilient Growth

Canadian Urban Institute and the City of Toronto — Wednesday, May 16, 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm
Interactive Panel Discussion, Toronto Reference Library
Participants were invited to participate in a dialogue and share stories about what inclusive resilience in Toronto could and should look like.

Community Input on Canada's Drug Policy

Toronto Public Health— Thursday, May 24, 6 pm to 9 pm
Community Dialogue, Mimico Centennial Library
The session included a presentation from health and drug policy experts and moderated small group discussion about the approach to drugs in Canada.

Baby Point Heritage Conservation District Study

City of Toronto — Monday, May 28, 5:30 pm to 8:30 pm
Open House, The Old Mill
Information about a heritage study evaluating the Baby Point and Old Millside neighbourhoods was shared and participants could ask questions.

Open Table Conversation: CSI's Demographic Survey

Centre for Social Innovation — Tuesday, May 29, 6 pm to 9:30 pm
Open Table, Centre for Social Innovation (Annex)
The hosts shared the results of a recent demographic survey as well as the learnings from the survey. Participants took part in a discussion unpacking those learnings and discussing inclusion, diversity, equity, and access at the Centre for Social Innovation.

Second Units — Draft Official Plan Amendment

City of Toronto— Tuesday, June 5, 2018, 5:30 pm to 7 pm
Open House, Toronto City Hall
Participants were invited to review a proposed Official Plan Amendment and ask questions about the proposed policy.

TTC Open House: Easier Access Construction Update

TTC — Wednesday, June 6, 6:30 pm to

8:30 pm

Open House, Propeller Coffee Co.
The community was invited to learn about upcoming construction to make Lansdowne Station accessible.

307 Open Sidewalk # 1

Sidewalk Toronto — Saturday, June 16, 12 pm to 6 pm
Open House, 307 Lake Shore Blvd E
Participants were invited to attend an open house that featured product prototypes, performances, and workshops.

Metrolinx Online Townhall

Metrolinx and the City of Toronto — Thursday, June 21, 7 pm to 8 pm
Townhall, Online
Metrolinx provided an overview of the project and participants were invited to ask questions through a moderator by telephone or online.

Richmond-Adelaide Cycle Track — Public Drop-in Event

City of Toronto — Monday, June 25, 12 pm to 3 pm and 4:30 pm to 7:30 pm
Public Meeting, Metro Hall
Residents were invited to review a proposed change to the cycle track and provide feedback and ask questions to the project team.

Community Consultation on Port Lands Flood Protection

Waterfront Toronto — Wednesday, July 18, 6 pm to 9 pm
Public Meeting, St. James Cathedral Centre
The project team presented a basic overview of the project and provided updates on the design and construction. Participants were invited to give feedback on the design and project team members were on hand to answer questions.

SAY

Data for this project was collected over a six-month period. Below, each method is described in detail, including a notation of the relevant Volume where this data is represented.

Phase 1 — Discover

Literature Review

A literature review was conducted to understand gaps in knowledge and understanding with respect to public engagement. Over 80 sources were consulted, including a mix of academic journals, academic volumes, and mainstream and alternative news sources. This review lays the foundation of Volume 1.

Expert Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 16 experts who plan, execute, pay for, study, or benefit from public engagement processes. Semi-structured interviews involve asking participants a series of predetermined open-ended questions (Given, 2008). Based on the participant's response, the researcher may ask probing questions to elicit more information. Expert interviews were designed to uncover critical emerging trends related to public engagement sessions, and opportunities for intervention. Data from these interviews provides the foundation for the expert identified recommendations described in Volume 1.

The following is a list of the experts interviewed for this project:

Alex Way, Managing Director, and Eva O'Brien, Project Coordinator, MASSLBP

Mass LBP design and deliver deliberative processes for governments in addition to other services. MASS lead efforts to engage citizens in tackling policy choices. They pioneered the creation of Civic Lotteries and Citizens' Reference Panels.

Amy Hubbard, Co-Founder / Director, Capire

Capire, based in Melbourne, Australia, is a community engagement consultancy that works to connect decision-makers with their communities. Amy has

worked extensively with state and local governments to deliver engagements and build capacity in engagement through training.

Andrea Hamilton, Vice President of Social Impact, Generation Capital

At Generation Capital, Andrea assists her clients with putting their capital to work for good and is interested in how funders can invest in processes of change that lead to positive, sustainable transformations. As a funder of public engagement processes and a Masters in Urban Planning, Andrea has a unique perspective on public engagement.

Claire Nelischer, Project Manager, Ryerson City Building Institute

The Ryerson City Building Institute produces public policy research and shares insights addressing diverse urban challenges to promote healthy neighbourhoods, cities and regions, starting with the GTHA. Claire's work with the City Building Institute focuses on planning and policy to support a vibrant public realm. She has authored reports on a range of topics including sbentreet design, parks policy, and planning for civic assets, and frequently presents and writes on urban issues.

Daniel Fusca, Senior Policy Advisor, City of Toronto's Resilience Office Specializing in Stakeholder Engagement

Daniel has been involved in public engagement in various roles at the City of Toronto. Prior to his current role, Daniel worked as the Coordinator of Stakeholder Engagement and Special Projects in the Toronto City Planning Division. During his time there, he led the implementation of several engagement projects including Growing Conversations: Making Engagement Work, a Youth Engagement Strategy, an educational program called Planners in the Classroom, and the City's first citizen reference panel.

Dina Glazer, Senior Advisor, Institute on Municipal Finance and Governance at the Munk School of Global Affairs, University of Toronto, and Project Director, the National Housing Collaborative.

Dina specializes in urban projects that build and engage communities. She has a wide-ranging background in the private, public and nonprofit sectors. Dina works with people and communities to build consensus and make progress on complex problems.

Gail Shillingford, Associate, Dialog

Dialog is a design and architecture firm that operates in Canada and the United States. Gail has a background in urban design and landscape architecture, a combination that provides her with a broad understanding and working knowledge of the frameworks of master planning including built form, open space, and movement systems, and has enriched her expertise in the design of significant urban environments. Gail's work often involves creating mechanisms to engage users throughout the design process.

Jane Farrow, Owner, Department of Words and Deeds

Jane specializes in bringing people together for constructive dialogue and creative city building initiatives. Jane's approach prioritizes collaboration, transparency and a deepened understanding of the issues at hand so that people can offer informed opinion and direction. She has designed, led, and collaborated on a wide range of regional and local projects, including land use and transportation plans, culture strategies, park and public realm designs, walkability and wayfinding strategies, and community development initiatives.

Lhazin Nedup, Project Manager, Evergreen

Lhazin leads 100 In 1 Day, a festival of civic engagement that demonstrates the capacity citizens have in creating a better city, and the Civic Commons project. Prior to her role at CityWorks, she was with Ashoka Canada where she focussed on leveraging partnerships with stakeholders and supported the Ashoka Changemaker's competition.

Nick Vlahos, Design Researcher, Civic Innovation Office, City of Toronto

The Civic Innovation Office is focused on

creating more responsive government that acts quickly and meaningfully for the people it serves. As a design researcher, Nick is interested in how inclusive design can empower the public. His research background includes the British Columbia Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform, participatory budgeting, and deliberative democracy. Nick's professional experience spans years of community engagement and capacity-building as well as forum facilitation in various non-profit organizations and the Toronto Community Housing Corporation.

Nicole Swerhun, Principle, Swerhun Inc.

Nicole has extensive experiencing connecting decision-makers in the public and non-profit sectors to the constituencies they serve. Swerhun Inc. designs and delivers consultation and engagement processes for decision-makers, making large, complex multi-stakeholder projects constructive and manageable. Their approach to public consultation processes is grounded in creating processes that enable information flow between stakeholders and demonstrating how different perspectives and priorities influence the end result.

Pamela Robinson, Associate Dean, Faculty of Community Services, and Associate Professor in the School of Urban and Regional Planning, Ryerson University

Pamela's research and practice focus on urban sustainability issues with a particular focus on cities and climate change and the use of open data and civic technology to support open government transformations. She serves on the board of directors of the Metcalf Foundation and has participated in four Metrolinx

Community Advisory Committees. She is also a registered professional planner.

Stephen Walter, Program Director, Mayor's Office of New Urban Mechanics in Boston, Massachusetts

Stephen researches and designs civic media, technology, and spaces. At the Mayor's Office of New Urban Mechanics, he helps lead efforts around experiments in civic engagement, storytelling, technology, and research. He also helped co-authored the City's Civic Research Agenda. Previously, Steve was the founding managing director of the Engagement Lab, an applied research lab for reimagining civic engagement in a digital era.

Tai Huynh, Creative Director, OpenLab, University Health Network

OpenLab is a design and innovation shop dedicated to finding creative solutions that transform the way health care is delivered and experienced. OpenLab is located at the University Health Network (UHN), Canada's largest research hospital, but its work extends beyond the walls of UHN. As the Creative Director, Tai employs an anti-disciplinary mashup of scientific, business and design thinking to his work. OpenLab works directly with end-users to co-design solutions.

Zahra Ebrahim, Mentor/Advisor on Design and Insights, Doblin/Deloitte, and Executive Advisor on Civic Innovation, Doblin/Deloitte

Zahra is a human-centred designer and urbanist, whose work focuses on using participatory practices to engage citizens in the design of services, policies and infrastructure that directly affect them. As the former co-lead of Doblin Canada, Zahra helped the organization build a culture focused on inclusion, co-creation, and psychological safety.

Insider Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with two practitioners of public engagement. Participants in these interviews had similar experience to those in the expert interviews, but wished to remain anonymous. These interviews were similarly designed to uncover issues related to public engagement and opportunities for intervention. These contributions informed Volume 1.

User Interviews

Semi-structured user interviews were conducted with 13 residents, both those who have participated in public engagements and those who have not. In design research, interviews with participants — those directly impacted by your area of focus — are a fundamental method to collect firsthand accounts of “experience, opinions, attitudes, and perceptions” (Hanington & Martin, 2012, p. 102). User interviews were designed to unearth what prevents or enables users to participate in current engagement processes. These findings are conveyed in Volume 1.

Systems Mapping Tools

Various system mapping tools were employed to deepen the research team's understanding of public engagement processes. These tools included Gharajedaghi's Iterative Processes of Inquiry (Gharajedaghi, 2011) and stakeholder analysis, which informed the development of a stakeholder matrix, and the mapping of ethnographic observations to the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation (IAP2, 2018). The output of these system mapping tools is synthesized in Volume 1.

Phase 2 — Define

Systems Mapping Tools

Additional tools were utilized to clarify and refine information. Affinity mapping helped the research team document and cluster observations and insights from expert and user interviews, and ethnographic observations (Hanington & Martin, 2012, p. 12). Influence mapping allowed the identification of feedback loops and provided a systemic view of the context within which public engagement is situated. As a result of these

processes, the research team was able to gather a set of expert recommendations, as well as challenges identified by both experts and users. These findings led to a set of insights, defining the focus of further research, all found in Volume 1.

Participant Feedback Loop

To elicit participant feedback on the direction of the research study, an Insights Report, from Phase 1, was drafted with the information gathered from research participants during the Discover phase. This report was shared with both experts and users interviewed and invited feedback which was used to refine Volume 1, and inform the focus of Volume 2.

Phase 3 — Develop

Horizon Scanning

To identify broader trends impacting public engagement processes, the research team conducted a strategic foresight horizon scan (Choo, 1999). The output of this horizon scan, a comprehensive set of trends impacting public engagement, was used to develop the scenarios in Volume 2 and was also a key input for Volume 3.

Trend and Driver Analysis

To narrow the list of trends, a trend impact analysis was done to examine the underlying drivers of change and to determine which may have the greatest impact on public engagement. As part of this analysis, drivers, or underlying causes of trends, and the potential impact, likelihood, and the maturity of the trend were all examined (UNDP Global Centre for Public Service Excellence, n.d.). Trends were grouped using two conceptual frameworks, STEEP-V (Institute for Alternative Futures, 2013) and Verge (Lum, 2015). This narrowed group of trends is described in Volume 2.

World Building

Jim Dator's (2009) Generic Images of the Future (Generic Images) method was used to develop a framework for scenario

development which created the foundation for four distinct scenarios. Influence mapping was used to ensure that scenarios were logical. Volume 3 discusses this process in detail.

Phase 4 — Deliver

Participant Feedback Loop

To ensure the set of scenarios was representative of the narratives and ideas generated by workshop participants, the scenarios were shared with participants for feedback. This process is discussed in Volume 3.

Phase 3 — Develop

Foresight Game Development and Prototyping

This game, adapted from ForesightNZ's playing cards (New Zealand Treasury, & McGuinness Institute, 2016), includes the full set of trends and required the development of Wildcard Events (Forward Thinking Platform, 2014). The game, called In the Event, was prototyped and iterated several times by the research team.

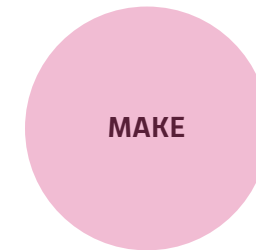
Foresight Game Workshop

To engage participants (both experts and users), the research team designed a participatory workshop with the goal of enabling research participants to generate narratives about the futures of public engagement. This workshop was built around playing the game In the Event. Volume 3 focuses on describing the development of this card game and its use in detail.

Phase 4 — Deliver

Scenarios

Four distinct scenarios were developed to provoke new thinking about the possible futures of public engagement using the output from the foresight card game. These scenarios are found in Volume 2.



Limitations of this Study

Geographic scope

While broader contexts were studied through the literature review and expert interviews, this research is focused on public engagement within the Toronto context. Some components of this research may be applicable to other cities within and beyond Canada; however, it is important to note that the focus was specifically Toronto.

Sample Size and Participants

While attempts were made to engage a representative sample of Torontonians to participate in this study, this proved to be a challenge given timelines and resources available. As a result, it should be noted that the final output is not necessarily representative of the views of all Torontonians.

Time Constraints

This study was conducted over the course of six months by part-time students who balanced this work with full-

time employment. Components of this project, such as the research team's breadth of ethnographic observations, participant outreach efforts, and the number of design workshops delivered, were impacted by the amount of time available to the research team.

Definition of Public Engagement

Throughout this study, there was a recurring challenge related to the lack of agreement around the definition of public engagement. While this challenge was identified as an opportunity for further study, this research does not seek to create a universal meaning of public engagement. For the purposes of this research, public engagement was broadly defined as "a broad range of methods through which members of the public become more informed about and/or influence public decisions (Institute for Local Government, 2016).

Feedback Loops

Ensuring that participants in public engagement processes understand how their input was used in a process proves to be one of the biggest challenges. This often required presenting information back to participants in creative ways. Despite best efforts to solicit feedback from participants in this project, very few participants replied to the request for feedback.

Co-creation

While we endeavoured to engage participants as much

as possible throughout the project, there are parts in the process that were driven by the research team and did not include direct participation. This decision was driven by time constraints rather than a desire to take an expert-led approach to this research.

Research Bias

While attempts were made throughout the process of this research project to remain politically impartial, it should be noted that members of the research team are all progressive in their political views.

VOLUME 1

A Primer on Public Engagement

What role does the public play in government decision-making?

How did public engagement come to be and what is its purpose?

How does that apply to the context of Toronto in 2018?

An understanding of these core concepts in public engagement is instrumental for the work of public servants. This document is to be used as a reference guide for the engagement work of municipal public servants.

INTRODUCTION

How to Use This Volume

This Volume is divided into three sections, each situating public engagement based on public discourse, expert opinions, and historical context. The first chapter **defines public engagement** and how it came to be. The second chapter reviews **common frameworks** for defining and designing public engagement initiatives and strategies. The third chapter describes the findings of this research study and includes **current themes, challenges, and expert recommendations** related to public engagement in Canada and beyond.

This Volume is for public servants who are unfamiliar with public engagement or uncertain of how to effectively integrate public engagement into their work. The hope is that this information will be put to use by public servants to design and plan public engagement processes that consider and transcend current challenges.

How This Volume Was Created

The ideas and content described below were generated using the following tools and processes:

- **18 expert and insider interviews** with public engagement practitioners, academic researchers, and public servants with representation from Canada, the USA, and Australia.
- **13 user interviews** with Toronto residents who have either participated in public engagement or consciously chosen not to.
- An **affinity and insight mapping** based on the content collected through the interview process to generate insights.
- **Feedback from expert participants** about the accuracy of the summary of interview findings and resulting insights.
- A broad analysis of currently available **research and information** about the history and current use of public engagement in North America.

Limitations of the study

While this is a helpful primer for understanding public engagement, it does present some limitations. Though each interview was rich and generated a lot of content, interviewees were secured through the researchers' personal and professional networks initially and then through a snowball sampling technique. This was largely successful due to the relatively small community of public engagement in Toronto, but the technique likely left important voices unheard. The team was unable to work around the schedules of some interviewees, hindering their participation.

“[Public Engagement] is a general term [...] for a broad range of methods through which members of the public become more informed about and/or influence public decisions.”

Institute for Local Government, 2016

CHAPTER 1

Public Engagement Context & History

History of Public Engagement

Understanding the history of public engagement is critical for practitioners; a lack of context can lead to the misconception that the field is new or emergent, calling into question its usefulness and validity (Crane, 2018). Though there has been a recent increase in public dialogue about engagement, versions of today's public engagement date back to as early as 400 BC in Greece, used by the government as an integral part of their direct democracy (Reddick, 2010). This process involved convening citizens — at the time citizenship was restricted to male landowners — to hear issues, discuss, and vote on them.

Much later, as early representative democracies began to form, public engagement as we know it today became the process through which elected officials understood the needs and interests of the citizens they were meant to represent. For example, public engagement processes have been applied to the development of post-World War II health policy in England's National Health Service in the 40s, and in many instances of collaborative budgeting in the United States of America (Shipley & Utz, 2012).

Throughout its history, public engagement has seen the same challenges. For one, people have often questioned what should be up for debate and to what degree. Elected officials and

“...[it] becomes clear, in looking to history, that official consultative mechanisms have never been able to slake the public thirst for engagement.”

Jennifer Crane, 2018

experts often viewed public engagement as an impediment to process. More recently, input from organized interest groups with polarized needs has been difficult to manage alongside more nuanced input of residents at large (Crane, 2018). Public engagement has been a part of democracy since its inception, but is only recently receiving widespread mainstream attention as the term creeps into public vocabulary.

Contemporary Public Engagement

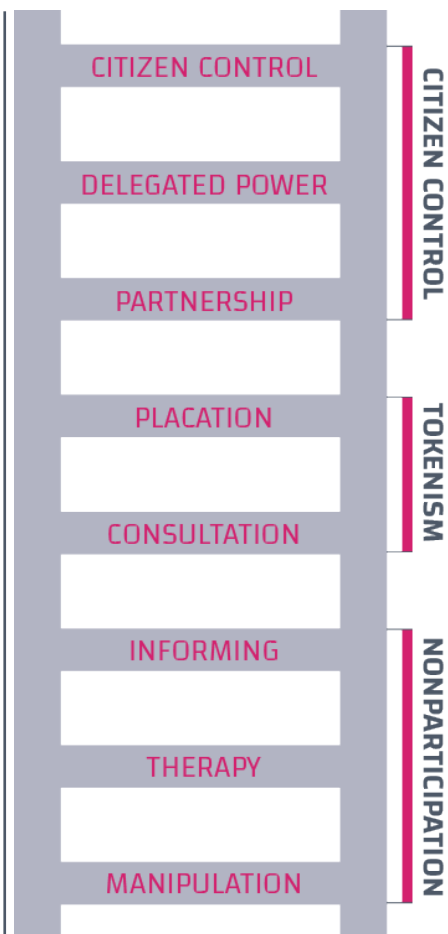
As urban centres expand in population and diversity, elected officials in cities now represent more citizens than ever before, underpinning the importance of sound public engagement processes. With more social distance between elected officials and residents, public engagement processes play a multifunctional role. With information flow from government to residents, they serve to make more information available to residents, to increase levels of civic education, and to invite support for important initiatives from residents. With increases in constituency size, the feedback loop between residents and government is becoming more important to offer a better understanding of the needs of residents, and often their positions on specific issues (Giovannetti & Gray, 2018; Newfoundland Labrador Office of Public Engagement, n.d.).

The advent of technology and consequent democratization of information means that, now more than ever, residents are better able to understand and interact with government. Access to information technology — over 88% of Canadians are online (Canadian Internet Registration Authority, 2017) — is shifting expectations of government to be more transparent and responsive. Coupled with declining trust in government, evidenced by an overall decline in voter participation in the past 50 years (Turcotte, 2015) and research indicating that “Canadians are increasingly frustrated with and disconnected from their democratic structures and processes” (Sheedy, 2008), it is evident that an improvement to the approach to public engagement is being demanded by Canadian residents.

Frameworks and Tools for Public Engagement

There are many published frameworks that aim to clarify the purpose of an engagement and to guide practitioners through designing, delivering, and evaluating public engagement processes. While certainly not an exhaustive summary, these are some of the more promising tools available to public servants for directing intentional and informed public engagement processes.

Fig 5: Arnstein's Ladder of Public Participation



Arnstein's Ladder of Participation

Sherry Arnstein's ladder of participation is one the earlier works that helps people define the purpose of their engagement processes (1969).

Arnstein calls those served by contemporary electoral practices the "haves," and imagines public engagement as an opportunity for the "have nots" to gain a voice and influence decision-making. Though steeped in the language of the time, this is an early framework for understanding the quality of an engagement process and the likely outcomes of it. Her ladder model visualizes levels of engagement from low to high.

Arnstein defines the "Citizen Control" rungs of the ladder as a departure from the "empty ritual of participation" that many public engagement processes default to. She warns against public engagement processes that are intended to educate or help the public rather than support their input. She believes that only at the 'placation' level does the citizen

gain influence in decision-making.

Below are definitions of the categories of Arnstein's ladder:

- **Non-participation:** structures that engage citizens in predetermined processes for the sole purpose of educating them, rectifying their behaviours or opinions, or gaining their support.
- **Tokenism:** to be combined with higher levels of participation, this category involves making participants aware of their power and responsibility, and inviting their opinions. This category falls short of citizen control because opinions and participants are often pre-vetted.
- **Citizen Control:** these rungs involve authentic and official redistribution of power, structures for shared planning, and decentralized leadership.

Though new, more nuanced and impartial frameworks have emerged since, this tool/theory provides helpful historical context for people's expectations from public engagement processes and continues to be widely referenced today.

IAP2 Spectrum of Public Engagement

Perhaps the most commonly cited framework is The International Association of Public Participation's (IAP2) Spectrum for Public Engagement. Used as the basis for many provincial and municipal public engagement strategies, IAP2 is a non-prescriptive acknowledgement of all levels of the spectrum as instrumental in engaging with citizens. It calls for a combination of strategies based on the goal of engaging. It acknowledges that a different approach is necessary based on desired outcomes. Criticisms of the framework gathered through the organization's own public engagement process included an overemphasis on projects and specific issues, leading to its lack of ability to guide decisions beyond that for which the public is engaged (IAP2, 2006).

There is also value in reading critiques of how the spectrum is

	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.
PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision. We will seek your feedback on drafts and proposals.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work together with you to formulate solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

INCREASING IMPACT ON THE DECISION

Fig 6:
International Association for Public Participation Spectrum of Participation

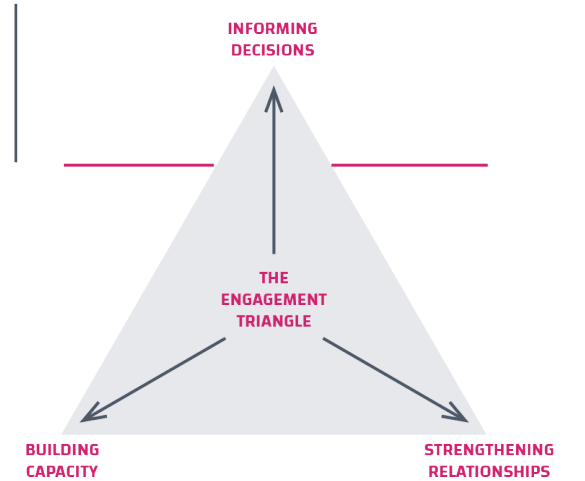
used. Steph Roy McCallum challenges practitioners, governments, and institutions to embed a commitment to authentic community engagement in organizational culture, and roles and responsibilities (McCallum, 2015). This commitment could involve setting clear institutional expectations as to when each of the categories on the spectrum is appropriate.

Many municipal governments in Canada have already adapted this tool to build local frameworks for community engagement and to instill responsibilities for engagement as an expectation of all public servants (City of Hamilton, 2018; City of Ottawa, 2018; City of Winnipeg, 2018; Province of Ontario, 2018). In Toronto, the reduction in the size of City Council will likely shift the responsibility of public servants, and create an opportunity to establish new city-wide expectations and guiding principles using this or a similar framework.

The Engagement Triangle

Another tool focused on helping practitioners understand the purpose of their engagement is Capire Consulting Group's Engagement Triangle. This is a highly practical tool that provides tool and technique recommendations based on the primary goal of a public engagement process.

Fig 7:
The Engagement Triangle, Capire



In contrast to Arnstein's ladder and IAP2's Spectrum, this tool defines a new area of purpose for public engagement processes: strengthening relationships. This purpose, as an end in itself, has not been defined elsewhere as a positive component of public engagement. As with Arnstein's ladder, the tool encourages a multi-purpose process with a single primary goal (Capire Consulting Group, 2016).

Inclusive Community Engagement Toolkit

Also from Capire Consulting Group is a comprehensive toolkit on leading inclusive engagements. With the tendency of new practitioners to focus on the design of the engagement event alone, this toolkit explores the stages before and after the engagement and provides practical tools for improving the inclusiveness and authenticity of the process.

Many reports emerging from engagement processes focus on the design and execution phases of engagement, and make no reference to challenges encountered. Once complete, they are rarely if ever updated, making it challenging to understand the long-term impact of the projects. Capire's toolkit offers practical strategies for avoiding these pitfalls.

Other Resources

Practitioners continue to contribute to the understanding of public engagement with the creation of applied resources and toolkits that demonstrate a variety of approaches (Swerhun, 2012; Hubbard, 2016; Mass LBP, 2017). In general, these resources focus on the design and execution phase of public engagements, with limited discussion of the implementation and evaluation phase.

In general, published frameworks lack a contextualization of the engagement process, overlooking the broader social, political, economic, and environmental factors that could impact the outcome of the project. Use of these tools should consider such shortcomings and take care to incorporate a future focus and contextual approach to application.

Public Engagement in Toronto

At the municipal level, decision makers have made public engagement processes central to many city planning decisions, as documented in numerous public engagement reports (Waterfront Toronto, 2002; City of Toronto, 2017; Keesmaat, n.d.). Typically, government approaches public engagement as a issue-specific conversation. So, while public engagements are now common, many are perceived as opportunities to inform and gain support from the public, with few opportunities for the public to influence decisions. The processes through which governments engage residents (e.g. Town Hall meetings) have been criticized for being inconvenient and, at times, exclusive. This can erase or obscure the diversity of the community. What is more, Toronto does not have a city-wide engagement framework or publically available policy on public engagement. There are frameworks in place for a youth engagement strategy and a newcomer engagement strategy, both important initiatives, but nothing that guides the whole municipality.

Throughout the course of this research, members of the research team attended 13 public engagement events in the city of Toronto to perform ethnographic observation. Ethnographic observation is a form of anthropological research that attempts to understand what the world means to people (Ladner, 2014) and is accomplished by observing users interacting with the environment around them. The research team observed and participated in these events over a five-month period. These observations, of how people interacted with each other and the environment, provided insight into the current state of public engagement in Toronto.

To ensure observational data was gathered in a consistent way, the AEIOU framework (Martin & Hanington, 2012) was used to record observations. The project team identified observation opportunities through various sources, including the City of Toronto Public Consultations web page, social media networks, and public notices. Events observed by the project team were

conducted by a variety of organizations, including the City of Toronto, nonprofits, and for-profit organizations.

The findings showed that the majority of these events were intended to inform residents of decisions that had already been made, with opportunities for minor adjustments to the final products. The majority were expert-led, and few were part of a larger strategy or process for community input.

Although these events are open to any resident, there are lower participation rates among women, immigrants, people of lower socioeconomic status, and those with less education, (Turcotte, 2015). Many of the events attended by the team had overrepresentation of white-presenting, older people. James Fishkin, a celebrated public administration academic researcher, warns against open calls for participation in public engagement processes, stating that the result is most often “inevitably an unrepresentative group of participants, usually open to capture by organized interests” (2011). This means that engagements run the risk of misrepresenting the views and beliefs of the impacted community. So, while many alternative methods to engage residents have been suggested (Frojmovic, Elliot, & Levac, 2007), it is important to understand what barriers exist to adopting them.

Toronto and its surrounding areas continue to grow rapidly (City of Toronto, 2017). Political polarization and conflict among communities pose increasingly inflammatory challenges to political systems worldwide (Arup Foresight, 2018). Toronto, being an incredibly diverse city, is not impervious to these changes (City of Toronto, 2015). As expectations of government increase and trust therein decreases, public engagement processes have become the subject of greater scrutiny. Sound practices and effective public engagement have never been more important.

CHAPTER 2

Effective Public Engagement

The process of engaging the public is subject to influence in many different areas. From the attitudes of an organization or unit toward public engagement through to the decisions made following a process, many areas present opportunities for improvement. This chapter synthesizes the perspectives of 18 experts, exploring recommendations for sound process and ongoing challenges to navigate. This chapter also weaves in the user perspective collected through interviews with residents of Toronto. This is not an exhaustive list of best practices, but a set of opportunities for public servants to begin to influence the way public engagement is done in municipalities.

This section explores five focus areas. Each area includes a rationale derived from research, a set of recommendations and a set of challenges, both based on the interviews of experts and insiders.

The Organizational Culture of Engagement

Why does it matter?

A representative democracy hinges on the ability of elected officials to accurately and competently represent the needs of their constituents. In a municipal setting, it falls to city councillors to advocate on behalf of their communities, involving them in decisions that have direct impact on their lives (Health Council of Canada, 2006).

In 2018, the Ontario Provincial Government passed new legislation, known as the Efficient Local Government Act, that decreased the number of Toronto city councillors to 25, down from a newly established 47 (Giovannetti & Gray, 2018). With a population of nearly 3 million people, this leaves wards of an average size of approximately 117,000 people (City of Toronto, 2017).

A municipal government that empowers city councillors to consider the futures of all members of their wards in planning

requires a process and commitment that prioritizes sound public engagement. This begins at an organizational level with some of the following actions and considerations.

RECOMMENDATIONS



Prioritize unrelenting transparency

A transparent process is integral to the success of a public engagement process. Transparency begins by communicating the intent of the engagement process and the influence that participants will have during the process and over the outcome. This transparency needs to be in place from the outset and continue throughout the entire engagement process.



Stated purpose

Prior to arriving at the engagement event, participants should have a clear understanding of the purpose of the engagement. At the outset of the event itself, facilitators should state the intention of the event, the agenda for the event, and what, if any, action will result from the event. There are published frameworks that help to clarify the purpose of an engagement, with the International Association of Public Participation's (IAP2) Spectrum for Public Engagement being the most commonly used. The clarity of purpose for participants is closely linked to the expert recommendations of Clear Intent and Unrelenting Transparency.


“We encourage governments to reveal themselves, and to be as transparent as possible around every single act.”

Nicole Swerhun, Swerhun Inc.


“Engaging to understand the local context [and] authentic forms of community engagement are really important.”

Lhazin Nedup, Evergreen CityWorks


CHALLENGES

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Definition of public engagement

There is broad interpretation of the term “public engagement”, and many feel this lack of clarity leads to poor engagement processes. Some experts prefer the use of “public consultation” which they feel is more specific, while others prefer the use of “civic engagement” which was defined as being more action oriented.
- 

Quantity of engagement

Many experts noted that there is too much engagement happening, which is leading to “engagement fatigue” and a feeling that “everyone is doing it”. Several noted that too much engagement is a result of the lack of understanding of public engagement and its use, while others noted that over-engagement can lead to distrust in the process.
- 

Organizational culture of engagement


In order for public engagement processes to be successful, there must be a culture of engagement in place within the host organization. Without this in place, the findings will not be valued, respected, or actioned.
- 

Trust in process

For public engagement to work, trust building with participants must take place throughout the process. Some experts noted that some processes feel designed to extract specific information from participants, which leads to cynicism, and prevents future participation.

“Community engagement can mean so many things, it can mean anything from knowledge sharing, education, information, it can mean empowerment, consultation, collaboration but it also can mean public relations or reputation management, or as I call it, the dark arts.”

Amy Hubbard, Co-Founder / Director, Capire

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Capacity of practitioners


Public engagement should not be one person’s or one department’s responsibility, as it may lead to high burnout rates among practitioners given the level of effort needed for any engagement. This challenge is closely related to time and funding constraints, which prevent more staff from being available for this type of work.

The Purpose

Why does it matter?

The reasons for engaging the public underpin all elements of its design, its audience, and its outcomes (Baker, Addams, & Davis, 2005). In nearly all processes, decisions of some sort have already been made prior to engaging the public (Nabatchi & Amsler, 2014). These decisions can include the focus and scope of a project, the resources available, and often the degree to which outcomes may be influenced by engagement (Fung, 2006). These decisions should play a guiding role in the approach to engagement, and can be mapped through some of Capire Consulting Group’s resources to ensure that the appropriate tools, processes, and design conditions precede the design of an engagement (Fung, 2015). An unclear understanding of the goals of an engagement can lead to poor event design, scrutiny from attendees or the larger public, and unusable outcomes (Quick & Feldman, 2011).

RECOMMENDATIONS

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Clear intentions

The project team or organization conducting the engagement needs to have a clear understanding of why they are engaging, what they are hoping to learn through the process, and how participants will contribute. These teams must approach public engagements with an attitude open to hearing all opinions as valid.

“We’re here to protect the integrity of government, not protect government.”

Nicole Swerhun, Swerhun Inc.

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Selective engagement


Careful consideration needs to be given when deciding whether or not to engage the public on an issue or project. Organizations should only engage communities when issues are relevant to them and where there is something up for influence.
- 
Effective facilitation

While the success of the event is certainly contingent on good process design, facilitation is equally important. The question of who will facilitate the event needs careful consideration and, where possible, the use of community members as facilitators is recommended. The facilitator must remain modest and unbiased, and create a safe and open environment that allows for a diversity of opinions to be voiced. Acknowledging the power dynamics at play in the room is key to establishing trust with participants.
- 
Meaningful value

Participants must be able to find value in their participation alone. Public engagements should be meaningful for participants and create opportunities for learning — they should never be or feel transactional in nature. These engagements can be a powerful mechanism to bring divided communities together and they should be designed with opportunities for people to talk to and learn from one another. People should leave public engagement events with an immediate sense of satisfaction for having attended and contributed to something valuable.


“Participation in civic life is something that adds value and meaning to everyone’s life — it shouldn’t be transactional, it should help you grow and find meaning.”


Stephen Walter, Program Director, Mayor’s Office of New Urban Mechanics in Boston


- 
Focus on lived experience

Allow community members to share their expertise and defer to lived experience. The engagement should endeavour to create a shared understanding of the history of the community and the diversity of experience within the community. The issue that participants are being asked to engage on or with needs to be contextualized for the community. Storytelling is a powerful medium through which community members can engage.

CHALLENGES

- 
Transactional nature of engagements

The temporal nature of public engagement processes was mentioned by numerous experts as being a challenge. People need time and space, not a transaction. Current city regulations related to public engagement — such as the one mandatory public meeting requirement for the development review process — inhibit meaningful participation for residents.
- 
Use of public engagement processes

Public engagement is occasionally misused as a change management or public relations tool by government or corporations. Other experts noted that public engagement is sometimes used to no end, leading to “engagement fatigue” and distrust in the process.
- 
Power dynamics

There is a need to identify new ways to empower public engagement participants; however, there is fear of handing over power to non-experts. Some experts noted that sharing power with residents through a public engagement process is an illusion and that transparency about the level of influence available to participants is most important.

The Purpose

Why does it matter?

The purpose of engaging is to better represent the needs and interests of the public in decisions that affect them (Thomas, 2013). This highlights the importance of getting the audience right, so that the views and beliefs of impacted communities are not buried beneath those of the most readily available and eager to participate (Fishkin, 2011).

Toronto, more than most Canadian cities, is made up of diverse communities with consequently diverse experiences, values, and cultural norms (Toronto City Council, 2003). However, in public engagement processes related to city building and planning decisions, “homeowners over the age of 55 typically dominate the conversation” (City of Toronto, 2015).

A municipal government that aims to do this effectively cannot rely on the awareness, motivation, and trust of its constituents to find their way into conversations that affect them. Concerted efforts are required to ensure participation and representation from the people most affected by government decisions.

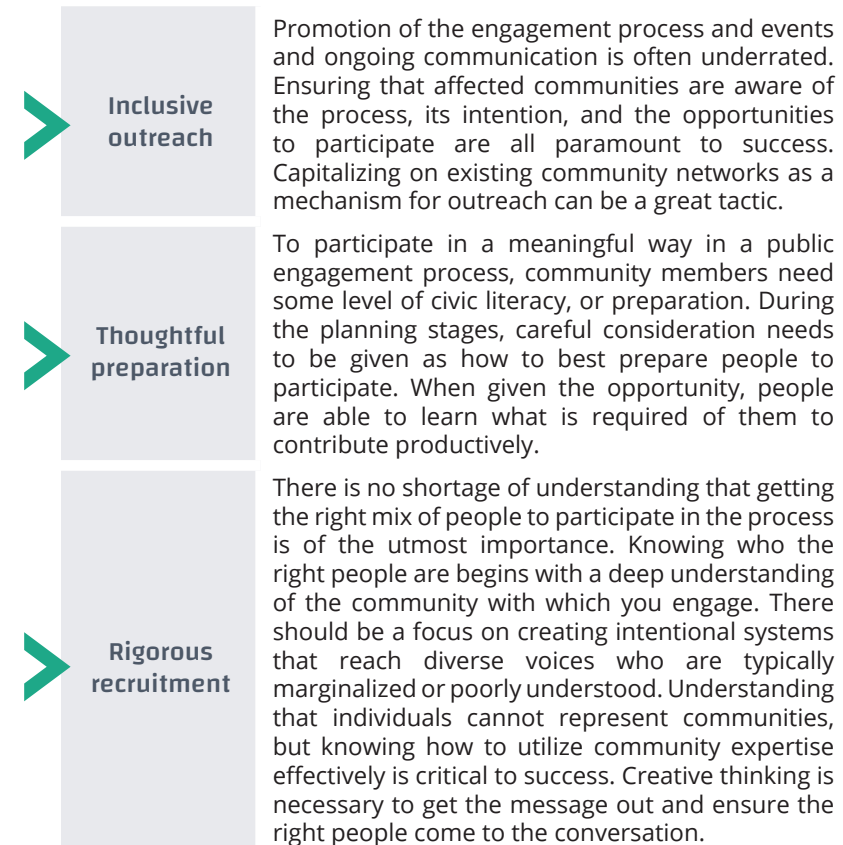
“If we understand communities, we should be able to understand if they are distrusting, versus fatigued.”

Amy Hubbard, Co-Founder / Director, Capire

“There is so much informing [in public engagement processes] versus trying to figure out the collective understanding on the topic.”

Zahra Ebrahim, Doblin/Deloitte

RECOMMENDATIONS



“People need to find meaning in the engagement process, not just the outcomes.”

Stephen Walter, Program Director, Mayor’s Office of New Urban Mechanics in Boston

CHALLENGES

➤ **Outreach**

Many experts commented on a lack of representation of Toronto’s diverse population in current engagement processes. One of the common reasons cited was that outreach efforts are often undervalued by some practitioners, and/or under- resourced. Online tools are an opportunity to increase outreach efforts; however, this approach was called into question by others who said that digital engagement privileges those who have unrestricted access to internet.

➤ **Civic literacy among residents**

Public engagement is seen as a way to increase civic literacy, yet many experts noted that the general public’s lack of civic literacy impedes their ability to participate in the first place. This lack of civic literacy is illustrated by some participants who expect immediate responses from engagement processes.

“You need to educate people so they know as much as [experts] know.”

Gail Shillingford, Dialog

“You can recruit smaller number of people to have input in a deeper way and then more broadly test those ideas. You don’t have to start with the funnel approach.”

Jane Farrow, Owner, The Department of Deeds and Words

RESIDENT PERSPECTIVES

➤ Motivation to participate	Having a strong opinion on the issue at hand is an important motivation for participation. Residents largely said that they participate when they are concerned or unhappy with the direction of a project. Those who do not have strong opinions or feel powerless in impacting decisions opt not to participate.
➤ Connection to community	Residents describe that a deep connection to their community or neighbourhood is an essential component of their motivation to participate in public engagement processes. People describe processes as providing greater insight into the interests and positions of peers within their community.
➤ Resident access	Residents describe public engagement as time-consuming and arduous. From identifying and locating opportunities for engagement to scheduling them into busy lives, public engagement is seen as an imposition that should be made much easier. Residents believe that meaningful public engagement should be seamlessly integrated into daily life. Processes that are not time- or location-dependent favour higher engagement from residents. Meaningful public engagement meets people on their own terms.
➤ Civic literacy	Residents perceive the need for a deep understanding of all levels of government, its inner workings, as well as of the issue and associated project at hand. A deficit in any of these areas can lead to residents avoiding or ignoring public engagement opportunities.
➤ Imposter syndrome	For various reasons, many residents report feeling like imposters in public engagement processes. These include a perceived need for a certain number of years of residency before participating, frequently being the only “diversity” in the room, renting as opposed to buying, and feeling overpowered by more vocal participants. These reasons de-motivate residents from engaging.

The Design

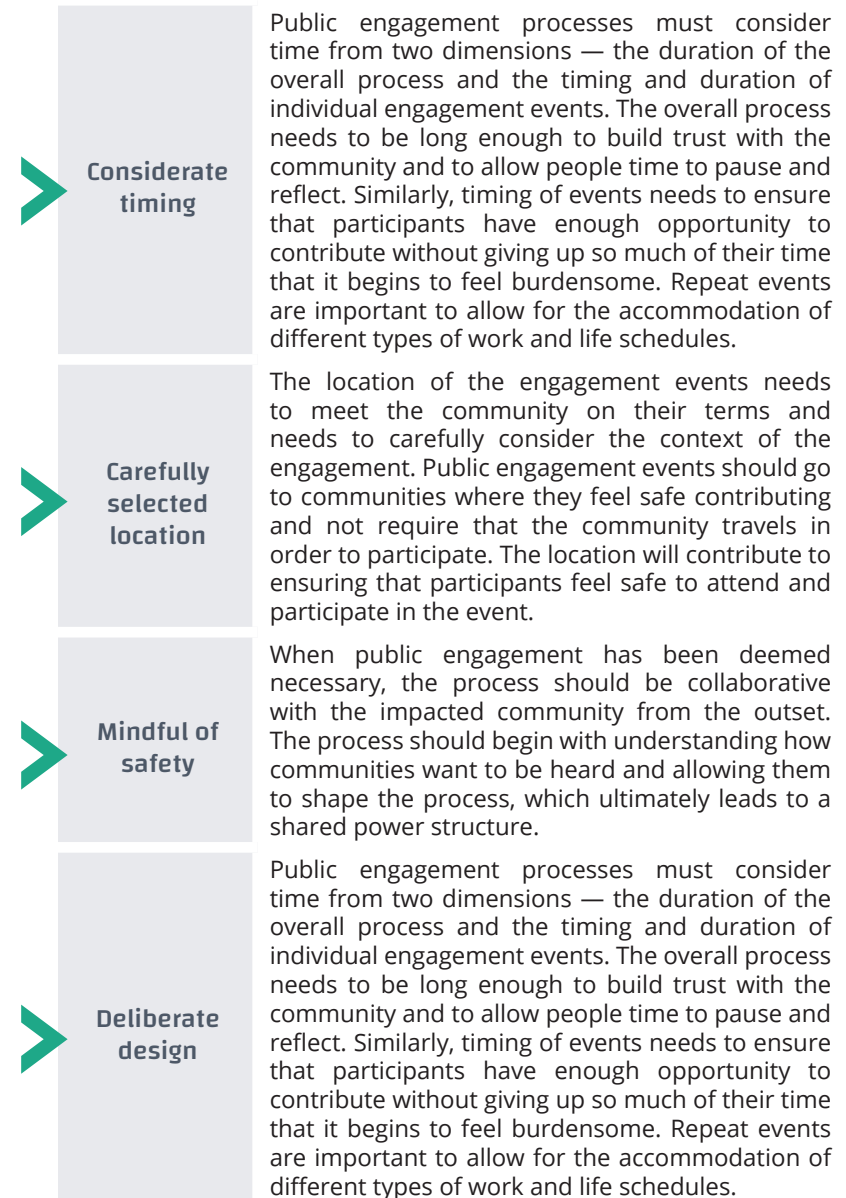
Why does it matter?

Public engagement is more than just an event. Since the design of the event(s) is the most tangible aspect of the engagement process, energy and evaluation is focused here. There has been much effort to understand what contributes to effective and inclusive event design; however, successful public engagement extends far beyond the event itself. For practitioners, who are hired to deliver engagement processes, the event design is an aspect over which they have more influence and control. However, for public servants who include public engagement as a core part of their role, design should not be the focal part of the effort invested.

Even so, a thoughtful design and engaging process is often a meaningful enough experience for many and might serve to deepen residents’ connection with their government, and the likelihood that they will engage in future processes. In the Toronto setting, public engagement events are led in many different ways. The following section describes some of the key overarching principles and challenges.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Collaborative process design When public engagement has been deemed necessary, the process should be collaborative with the impacted community from the outset. The process should begin with understanding how communities want to be heard and allowing them to shape the process, which ultimately leads to a shared power structure.



“Are you expecting them to come you on your terms or are you going to them on their terms, on their time, in their environments, where they feel safe?”

Tai Huynh, Creative Director, OpenLab, University Health Network

Fun moments

The location of the engagement events needs to meet the community on their terms and needs to carefully consider the context of the engagement. Public engagement events should go to communities where they feel safe contributing and not require that the community travels in order to participate. The location will contribute to ensuring that participants feel safe to attend and participate in the event.

Necessary flexibility

Flexibility is required on many levels to ensure a successful public engagement process. People need to have a sense of control over how they choose to engage and events need to be designed and facilitated in such a way that allows for this flexibility. Given that some of these engagement processes take place over long periods of time, flexibility must be built in to the process to adapt to the needs of a community as they change over time.

CHALLENGES

Funding

One of the most common challenges identified by experts is funding. Funding can limit or constrain what a practitioner is able to deliver, either due to available budget or due to the power and control the funder may hold over the project. Numerous experts identified instances in which funders shifted their priorities mid-project, impacting the outcome.

Time

The majority of experts noted the importance of having sufficient time to plan and conduct outreach for successful engagements. However, closely related to funding, and political cycles, public engagement timelines are often too tight, and do not allow for multi-modal engagement points.

Engagement competencies

Some experts feel there are well intentioned, yet poor practitioners in the field of public engagement, while others cited examples of practitioners they felt were highly skilled. One expert noted that a major flaw of practitioners is to use processes that allow participants to communicate their position on a topic, and not their specific interests.

The Follow-Up

Why does it matter?

Government decision-making is complex and, while intended to protect the public's best interest, often necessarily excludes residents. Power dynamics influence all phases of the engagement process, how they are planned and executed, and the degree to which residents influence decisions. Ultimately, there may not always be an understanding that final decision-making power belongs to the government and that decisions may not reflect input from residents.

Following up with participants, both immediately and once projects have come to fruition, provides closure to residents and demonstrates to them the value of having been involved. For many, simply enjoying the facilitation and activities in an engagement process does not justify the time and effort needed to be involved. A follow-up demonstrates that their efforts were treated with the significance they deserve.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Efficient feedback

In the short-term period after an engagement event, organizations should work to synthesize the findings from the event into a comprehensive summary report. This summary report should be shared with participants as soon as possible to give them an opportunity to validate that their contributions are accurately represented. This strong feedback loop is necessary to keep people engaged.

- **Rationalized decisions** In the longer-term, participants need to continue to be updated on the outcome of the public engagement process. Organizations need to clearly explain the rationale for the decisions that are being pursued. It is equally important to explain to participants why a certain decision or position could not be supported.
- **Demonstrate impact** Lastly, public engagement processes need to close the loop with participants on the impact their contributions had on outcomes. Outcomes of these processes need to be clearly communicated to members of the community who participated and how their participation impacted decisions.

“It’s the job of the consultant to advocate very constantly and rigorously for an open process that isn’t subject to political interference.”

Jane Farrow, Owner, The Department of Deeds and Words

CHALLENGES

- **Data overload** Synthesizing the extensive data that results from public consultations can be very challenging. Synthesizing qualitative data, in particular, is difficult and not always highly valued. An overload of data can prove to be ineffective and difficult to use.
- **Data privacy** Protecting the privacy of participant information creates an additional challenge for using data from public consultations. This is particularly true in the current social climate where growing concerns about data privacy issues are commonly reported in the media.

- **Representing data** Potentially resulting from poor synthesis, or as a result of political agendas, there is the potential of data being misrepresented. Data that is repackaged and that no longer represents the views of participants, erodes trust in the process, creating challenges for future participation.
- **Political will** For the most part, the outcomes of processes are left to policymakers to implement, and this requires political will. Paired with the fact that long-term issues cannot be addressed in four-year political cycles means that public engagement can often feel like a “box-ticking” exercise, and that no one willing to use the data that is collected.

RESIDENT PERSPECTIVES

- **Distance from decision-making** Though some residents demand more influence over government decisions, many acknowledge the limitations of meaningfully representing contributions from the public. Residents perceive great hindrances to influencing public engagement processes or outcomes and value the opportunity to be involved earlier in the process to optimize the impact of engagement. Residents familiar with engagement feel that a more effective approach to engagement involves allowing the public to inform principles and values for building livable neighbourhoods. They feel that developing a sense of the values of a community allows for greater harmony for residents and that issue-based engagement should be avoided.
- **Outcomes focus** Residents often feel removed from the impact of engagement processes. Although residents believe public engagement processes are becoming more participatory and creative, there is a desire to be better informed about how findings are used and how participant feedback is constrained.

“People will blame the process if they don’t like the outcome.”

Amy Hubbard, Co Founder / Director, Capire

CHAPTER 3

Influence Mapping

The process of affinity mapping and synthesizing the aforementioned recommendations and challenges demonstrated that there is a wealth of knowledge regularly applied to public engagement. It became clear that what residents and practitioners often perceive as an ineffective system is not due to a knowledge gap. The following map was created based on variables identified by residents and experts as impacting the quality of an engagement process.

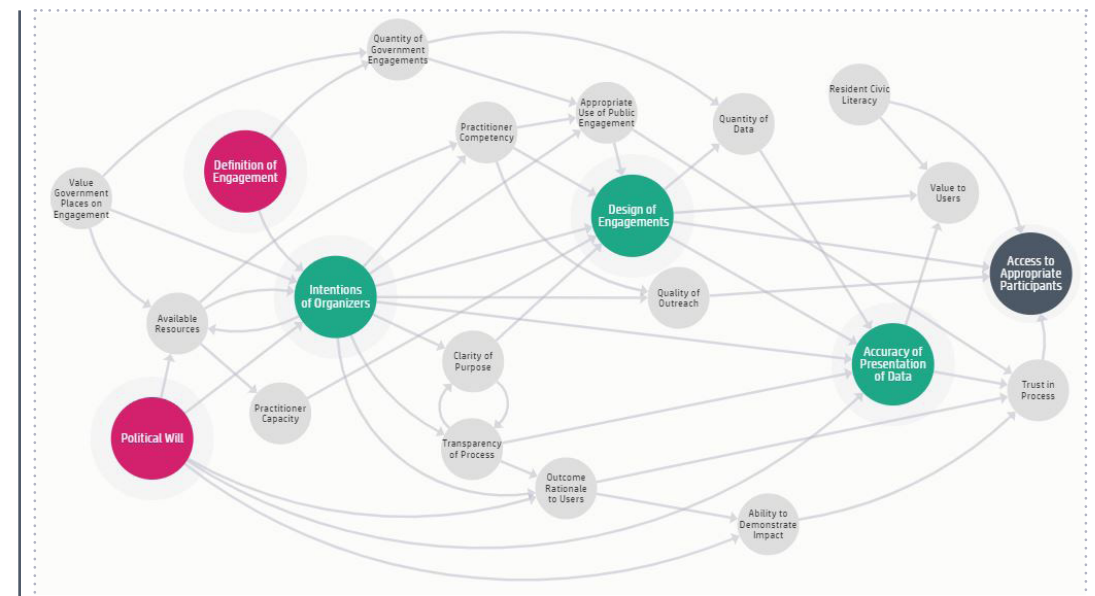


Fig 8: Primary Research Synthesis and Influence Map

Focal Points

The factors within the system of public engagement that were the most connected were named focal points. These are the elements where attention is typically focused. The intentions of organizers and accurate representation of data were considered impactful on outcomes, but most often comments were directed at the design of the engagements themselves.

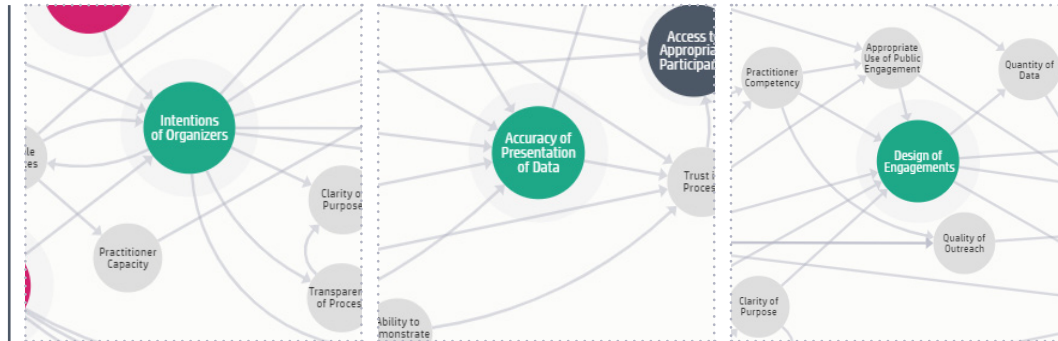


Fig 9: Focal Points within the Influence Map

Drivers

The factors within the system of public engagement that were the most connected were named focal points. These are the elements where attention is typically focused. The intentions of organizers and accurate representation of data were considered impactful on outcomes, but most often comments were directed at the design of the engagements themselves.

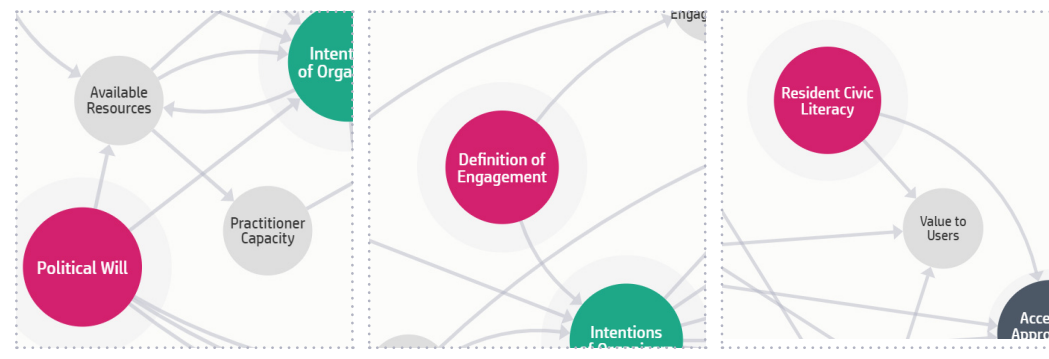


Fig 10: Drivers within the Influence Map

Mapping the elements that are instrumental to the success of a public engagement process revealed a series of insights and opportunities for future study. These are expressed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 4

Considerations and Areas for Influence

The synthesis and mapping of the above-noted data led to the generation of the following key research insights. These insights are based on the distillation of both primary and secondary research. Part of this process included the creation of an influence map (see Volume 1 Supporting Resources).

Community belonging is essential for participation. People need to feel a sense of safety and belonging in their community to feel as though their voice is valued in public engagement. A deep connection to community or neighbourhood is essential for participation in public engagement processes.

Civic literacy is the predominant systemic challenge identified by users. Many users blame a lack of widespread civic literacy as a contributor to poor public engagement. Residents believe that public engagement is not a core value of society which might stem from under-representation in school curriculum and absent or deficient public discourse about civic engagement.

Persistent challenges with public engagement are systemic. Many of the challenges that persist with public engagement are deep rooted systemic challenges that require extensive understanding and effort to improve. Focusing on event design can address some of these issues, but certainly not all. The majority of challenges identified by experts precede the engagement process.

Practitioners are not positioned to drive systems-level change. Among practitioners, there is a wealth of understanding of how to do public engagement well. It is difficult to put this knowledge into practice due to systemic challenges that practitioners cannot influence. Many of these challenges exist at a much higher systems level, within government, while the majority of practitioners operate outside of government and have little control over their processes.

Defining public engagement could drive better process and associated outcomes.

In the absence of a collective understanding or agreement of public engagement, there is room for poor process, leading to unsuccessful outcomes and eroding public trust. A clear definition could help clarify when an issue is suited to public engagement.

Generally, current processes engage the public too late.

Having a prescribed way of doing public engagement means that the public are not necessarily meaningfully engaged when their voices matter. Co-design is not often practiced, yet is identified as a promising approach by experts.

Public engagements conflate lived experience with content expertise.

People are experts in their own lived experience, yet many engagement processes ask participants to weigh in on topics that are beyond their expertise. Public engagement processes tend to focus a lot of energy on opinions of residents with respect to specific and tangible issues which are better left to experts — for example, where a park bench should be placed. However, they often fail to capture the values and interests of residents, which are less differentiated, less polarizing, more stable, and can be captured sustainably — for example, what people enjoy doing in a public space.

Public engagement is all about the future, but foresight tools are not widely used.

When asked, most practitioners were able to share a range of technical, political, and social trends affecting their field of practice. However, very few practitioners addressed how trends were incorporated into planning processes. This is not surprising given the vast array of considerations practitioners are tasked with. Environmental, economic, and values-based trends were largely not identified by experts. Despite the wide range of methods utilized by practitioners, strategic foresight tools are not cited as common components of public engagement. Given that all public engagements are about the future, there is an opportunity to leverage foresight tools in these processes.

CHAPTER 5

Areas for Future Study

This Volume is meant to provide public servants with a primer for understanding and entering the world of public engagement. It was developed based on research that sought to uncover areas for further study related to creating meaningful public engagement processes to inform city building decisions in Toronto. In doing so, a range of expert recommendations and inherent challenges within the field of public engagement were identified.

This data resulted in a series of insights, which catalyzed the process of applying foresight tools to public engagement. Volumes 2 and 3 of this report demonstrate the utility of foresight tools in informing how public engagement is used to effectively build trust between residents and government.

“Ultimately, [public engagement] is about having power and ownership over your future.”

Amy Hubbard, Co Founder / Director, Capire

VOLUME 1

Supporting Resources

Recommendations for Auditing an Engagement Process

The following chart outlines the expert recommendations uncovered in Volume 1 of this research project (please refer to Chapter 2 for more detail about each category of expert recommendation). As you plan a public engagement process, use this chart to indicate how you intend to achieve recommendations. Revisit this chart to assess if you were able to achieve each recommendation.



Recommendation	Plan for Meeting Recommendation	Achieved
The Organizational Culture of Engagement		
Prioritize Unrelenting Transparency		
Stated Purpose		
The Purpose		
Clear Intentions		
Selective Engagement		
Effective Facilitation		
Meaningful Value		
Focus on Lived Experience		
The Audience		
Inclusive Outreach		
Thoughtful Preparation		
Rigorous Recruitment		



Recommendation	Plan for Meeting Recommendation	Achieved
The Design		
Collaborative Process Design		
Considerate Timing		
Carefully Selected Location		
Mindful of Safety		
Deliberate Design		
Fun Moments		
Necessary Flexibility		
The Follow-Up		
Efficient Feedback		
Rationalized Decisions		
Demonstrate Impact		

Iterative Process of Inquiry for Public Engagement Planning

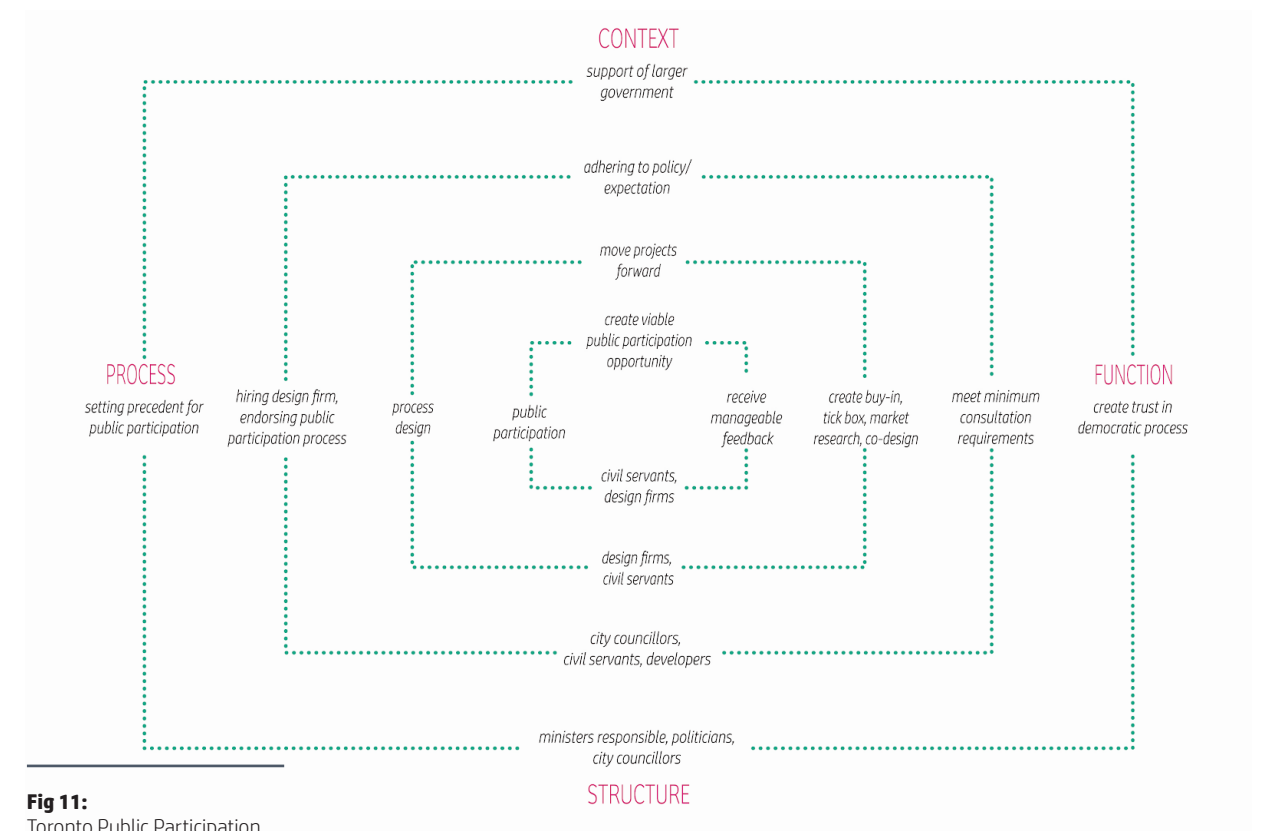


Fig 11:
Toronto Public Participation
(Gharajedaghi, 2011)

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VOLUME 2

Public Engagement in 2033

In 2033, will public engagement be completely digital? Will it be more localized? Will public engagement be a notion of the past? The purpose of this Volume is to facilitate the exploration of questions like these, with the goal of provoking new thinking about the future of city building public engagement processes.

INTRODUCTION

How to Use This Volume

The following is not a prediction of the future. The future does not yet exist; therefore, it is not a “thing” that can be definitively described. Instead, there are multiple possible futures that are currently being shaped by our actions today. As the Futures Cone (Fig 12) demonstrates, the possible futures multiply as more time passes. This is a governing principle of future studies and strategic foresight practices. Strategic foresight uses tools and processes that allow the exploration of possible, plausible, probable, and preferable futures so that organizations, and especially governments, can plan for what the future may hold.

The following Volume is divided into three chapters which each present information gathered on the future of public engagement using strategic foresight tools. The first chapter outlines the most **significant trends** impacting the future of public engagement. Building on these trends, the second chapter describes possible **future scenarios** that could result from the interaction and maturity of these trends. The final chapter provides **key considerations** designed to connect these possible futures to the present.

This document is for public servants who are involved in planning, delivering, or implementing outcomes of public engagement processes. The intent is to shed light on some of the anticipated changes that will impact public engagement, to enable public servants to think beyond the tyranny of the now, and to explore what the possible futures of public engagement could look like. By doing so, the hope is that decisions today will be “future proof” — better informed and more resilient to change.

How this Document Was Created

The ideas and content described within this document were generated using the following tools and processes:

- A comprehensive **Horizon Scan**, that used two conceptual frameworks (STEEPV and Verge) to organize 130+ signals into 44 trends.
- **Feedback from public engagement experts and users** resulted in the addition of 10 participant-identified trends.
- A ranking of the 54 trends by their degree of potential disruption to identify the **18 trends** most critical to the future of public engagement.
- The **collective scenarios process** (see Part 3) engaged participants to generate ideas about the future through a foresight card game. Participants’ ideas were mapped to four worlds created using Dator’s Generic Images of the Future scenario development method, with the addition of specific drivers of change mapped from the original 44 trends. This resulted in the **four scenarios** described in Chapter 2.
- **Considerations** for public servants (Chapter 3) are described drawing on key themes present throughout trends and scenarios.

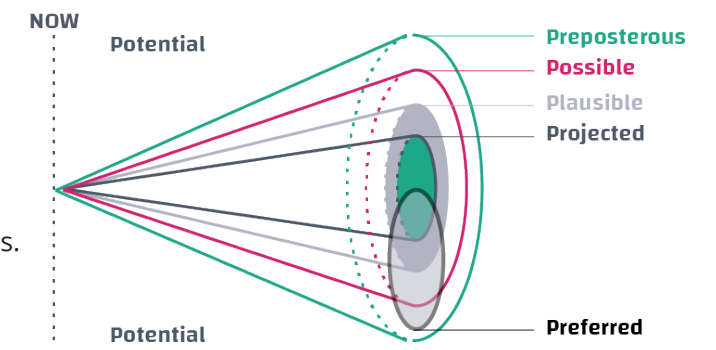


Fig 12:
Futures Cone

Limitations of the study

While this volume puts forward useful ideas about the future of public engagement, it should be noted that there are some limitations to this work. Components of this project, such as participant outreach efforts for workshops and the overall number of workshops held, were impacted by the amount of time the research team had available. Consequently, while concerted efforts were made to engage a representative sample of Toronto residents, timelines and resources made this challenging. Keep in mind when reading this document that, while Torontonians informed the final output, it is not necessarily representative of the views of all Torontonians.

Lastly, this work is intended to provoke new thinking about the futures of public engagement, but not to articulate a preferred future. Although it is critical to have a vision for what Torontonians want from public engagement in the next 15 years, this was not the focus of this particular work.

“The obsession with current events is relentless. We are made to feel that at any point, somewhere on the globe, something may occur to sweep away old certainties — something that, if we failed to learn about it instantaneously, could leave us wholly unable to comprehend ourselves or our fellows. We are continuously challenged to discover new works of culture — and, in the process, we don’t allow any one of them to assume a weight in our minds.”

Institute for Local Government, 2016

CHAPTER 1

Significant Trends Impacting Public Engagement

City building public engagement processes exist within a broad ecosystem, and like any ecosystem, even subtle changes can cause rippling effects. Decisions to hold public engagement processes are impacted by variables such as political will, available resources, and political systems. Conversely, levels of participation in these processes are impacted by work schedules, levels of trust in government, and power structures. These are just a few of the variables that influence public engagement. In order to understand the possible futures of public engagement, it is critical to understand all the related factors.

The following pages outline key trends that will impact public engagement in the next 15 years. These trends range in maturity and certainty, and are organized accordingly. Leading trends are those which have been impacting public engagement for some time, and are the most certain to continue. Emerging trends, on the other hand, are in the early stages of impacting public engagement and are less certain. Lastly, outlier trends are changes that exist on the fringe of public engagement, are least certain, yet still important to consider.

“Community engagement is about now pushing into the future.”

Amy Hubbard, Co-Founder / Director, Capire

LEADING TRENDS

The trends that follow are significant driving forces for the current and future state of public engagement. While these trends will shift in importance and attribution, all are certain to impact city building public engagement processes.

➤ Declining Trust in Government

Residents' trust in all levels of government is at an all-time low in Canada. By no means a problem unique to Canada, governments around the world are grappling with this challenge (Friedman, 2018).

Evidence of change:

- A 2017 study shows that 61% of Canadians do not trust the current federal government to respond to challenges facing the country (Delacourt, 2017)
- Premier Doug Ford launches an engagement process as a commitment to "restoring accountability and trust in how taxpayers' money is spent," (Government of Ontario, 2018)
- Toronto voter turnout decreases from 60% to 41% of eligible voters in the 2018 municipal election due to confusion over ward boundaries (Beattie, 2018)

Implications: Public engagement is a foundational component of democratic processes. The degree to which residents trust government has a direct relationship to the degree to which residents will trust a public engagement process, and therefore impacts the degree to which residents will participate. Lower levels of trust will not only result in lower levels of participation but also in higher expectations and scrutiny of the process.

➤ Struggling Civic Literacy

Civic literacy — the ability to understand how democratic processes work and how to participate in civic life — is critical

to a healthy democracy. Despite a mandatory civics course for Ontario high school students in grade 10, levels of civic literacy remain low.

Evidence of change:

- A study finds that only 50% of Canadians understand how the Prime Minister is elected (Kielburger and Kielburger, 2017)
- In 2016, Ontario considers scrapping a mandatory civics course, but scraps the plan when the idea meets public outcry (Tidridge, 2016)
- Residents state that voting in municipal elections is "confusing," and that navigating the process is challenging (Bueckert, 2018)

Implications: A lack of understanding of how government works could lead to unrealistic expectations among participants about how public engagement processes are used and could contribute to frustration or confusion. Related, a lack of understanding could be a barrier to participation, as residents may not feel as though they have a role to play in shaping city building decisions.

➤ 140 Languages and Counting

Toronto is currently home to a large and diverse population that speaks more than 200 languages (Statistics Canada, 2017). Nearly 5% of Toronto's population is without official-language skills, meaning they are naturally excluded from much of civic life.

Evidence of change:

- In their report, "Talking Access & Equity: A Profile of City of Toronto Residents Who Speak Neither Official Language," Social Planning Toronto examines the demographics of Toronto's non-official language residents. They find that residents who do not speak English face barriers to participate in civic life (Social Planning Toronto, 2018).
- In a Thorncliffe Park school, home to 630 students in 24 kindergarten classes there are over 40 languages spoken

(Porter, 2018).

- Just up the road from Toronto, the City of Markham's official website translates its content into more than 80 languages, reflecting the diversity in the community (Ansari, 2018).

Implications: With more and more languages spoken in the city of Toronto, there is a need to consider multilingual engagement processes. While translation services are expensive and potentially unrealistic for available budgets, there could be an opportunity to integrate digital translation applications, which have significantly increased in effectiveness.

EMERGING TRENDS

The following trends are directly related to public engagement processes and are continuing to mature in relevance, and therefore hold a strong degree of uncertainty. Regardless, they are critical to consider when thinking about the future of city building public engagement processes.

➤ Big Data

Government data sets are large and unwieldy, but they also say more about citizens and residents than the most effective public engagements can. Cities that leverage this data have begun to show promise for people-first cities.

Evidence of Change:

- The Smart Cities Council launched its Smart Cities Project Activator, a web-based portal to help cities collect, organize, and leverage data for smart city project planning. From GPS-enabled buses to weather sensors that trigger storm preparation, cities have turned to surer ways of making human-centred decisions (Leonard, 2018).
- Cities across the Civic Analytics Network, an affiliation of chief data officers from municipalities across the United States, are developing analytics models and visualization platforms to eliminate traffic collisions (Gover, 2018).

- Artificially intelligent applications employed by the Xinjiang government of China use predictive algorithms that assess various data streams to monitor trust in government and daily habits of citizens (Larson, 2018).

Implications: If information about resident needs can be uncovered through the collection and analysis of big data, will there still be a need for public engagement processes? Big data could help reduce reliance on large engagement processes, and provide the information needed to help public servants focus available resources.

➤ Data Privacy Concerns

With the rise of data collection in daily activities, data privacy has become a hot topic. Residents actively weigh the benefits of access to digital tools against the drawbacks of data collection.

Evidence of change:

- Canadians raise concern about the use of their data as online sales of government cannabis is legislated to begin in October 2018 (Graham, 2018).
- Facebook pulls two apps out of the App store due to concerns over user privacy and data handling (The Canadian Press, 2018).
- After a ruling allows realtors to publish more data than ever before, the Real Estate Board struggles to find the means to protect homeowner privacy and data (Deschamps, 2018).

Implications: As public engagement processes begin to leverage big data, or enter a discussion of smart city technologies, data privacy concerns will need to be acknowledged. If residents are not comfortable with their data being used to drive decisions, then big data is not going to help advance participation or support for public engagement processes (or trust in government for that matter).

➤ Power-Wielding Politicians

Government leaders, at all levels, are now wielding more power than some citizens are comfortable with, making unilateral decisions that bypass due process or override local decisions.

Evidence of change:

- Ontario PC government reduces the number of Toronto city councillors from 44 to 25, despite public consultations which indicated that citizens prefer a larger city council (Walsh, 2018).
- Kathleen Wynne's Ontario government steps in to stop Toronto's plan to add tolls to Don Valley Parkway (Benzie, 2017).
- Mayor John Tory advocates for "strong mayor system" that would give him more power in decision making (Rider, 2018).

Implications: If one politician can override the outcome of a public engagement process, how will this impact residents' desire to participate in future processes? Furthermore, if politicians hold all the power for decision making, what will be the role of public engagement processes?

➤ Self-Organizing Communities

Tired of waiting on city hall to make changes, communities are rallying together to self-organize to improve their neighbourhoods. From neighbourhood associations to civic tech groups, residents are mobilizing to take action.

Evidence of change:

- Junction Triangle residents form "Options for Davenport" to rally against planned rail overpass (CBC, 2016).
- Civic Tech Toronto, a self-organized and open community, meets weekly to solve civic challenges through technology, design, or other means. For example, "DemocracyKit" is an open online platform to share advice and tech with campaign teams running for municipal office (Civic TechTO, 2018).
- Residents in Shawnee, Kansas, use the city's customer

platform, "Shawnee Connect," to identify problems and connect with other residents interested in self-organizing to solve them (Wood et al., 2015).

Implications: The growth and proliferation of self-organizing communities presents an opportunity for targeted public engagement processes. If the community is already formed, there is more value in engaging directly than running a separate engagement process. This could lead to a shift in public engagement processes to more of a focus on stakeholder engagement processes.

➤ Rise of the Renters

Rising housing prices and an increase in purpose-built rental units are making renting the more feasible and desirable option for Millennials who have been priced out of Toronto's housing market.

Evidence of change:

- In March 2017, the Seattle Renters' Commission — the first of its kind in the US — was established to represent renters across the city and provide input and recommendations for issues and policies concerning renters (City of Seattle Website, 2018).
- As housing prices have continued to climb in Canada, so too has the percentage of renters in all major Canadian cities, including Toronto. Housing policies which, over the last few decades, have focused nearly exclusively on incentives for homeownership will need to change to ensure the availability and affordability of rental units (Press, 2017).
- The Ryerson City Building Institute and Evergreen, call for policy reform to ensure that 8,000 new purpose-built rental units are added to the Toronto housing market each year to meet the housing demand for the residents of Toronto (Ryerson University, 2017).
- In 2017, the Ontario Liberal government announced measures aimed at protecting renters, including the expansion of rent

control and \$125-million over five years to encourage purpose-built rental units in the province (Katsarov, 2017).

Implications: As renters start to outnumber homeowners in the city of Toronto, new ways to engage this segment of residents, who have been traditionally difficult to reach, will be critical. This may also result in a shift of engagement priorities, as renters will have different concerns from homeowners.

➤ Suburban Boom

There is no denying that Toronto's population is growing, but not nearly at the pace of the city's suburbs. The areas surrounding Toronto are becoming thriving bedroom communities.

Evidence of change:

- Suburban homeowners and car drivers have propelled the fast growth seen in the population of Canada's cities (Ibbitson, 2018).
- A lack of urban housing affordability drives people to settle in the suburbs of Canada's metropolitan areas (Haider and Moranis, 2018).
- According to the American census, suburban growth outstrips urbanization for the first time years (Frey, 2018)
- Suburbs to the north of Toronto see a rapid spike in Toronto commuters moving in (De Vidovich, 2018).

Implications: This suburban boom is fueling a workforce of commuters, who continue to use Toronto city services and be impacted by city building decisions. They may not be Toronto voters, but suburbanites are a growing stakeholder group requiring consideration for public engagement.

➤ Designing for Resilience

Whether it is street flooding, or power outages, residents are experiencing first-hand the impacts of climate change. Resilience, meaning the ability to recover quickly from difficulties, is

quickly becoming a focus for cities and extends to include social challenges that threaten to weaken a city's ability to recover.

Evidence of change:

- In 2016, Toronto joins the Rockefeller Foundation's "100 Resilient Cities" network with a two-year mandate to create the city's first Resilient Strategy, which addresses both climate and neighbourhood resilience (City of Toronto, 2018).
- A researcher with the International Institute for Environment and Development says that resilient cities must include systems that give citizens influence in government decision-making processes (Brewer, 2018).
- In 2017, a series of research papers, prepared for the cities of Edmonton and Calgary, by the International Institute for Sustainable Development and the University of Winnipeg's Prairie Climate Centre, explores recommendations for municipalities to build climate change resilience (IISD, 2018).

Implications: For cities to successfully build climate resilience, they must first begin to build neighbourhood resilience. This is particularly important for neighbourhoods that experience social and economic disparities. In many neighbourhoods, this will mean building trust with residents who have historically been left out of formal engagement processes.

➤ Virtual Reality

Why talk about a city building decision with residents when you can have them experience it? The rise of virtual reality (VR) opens a world of possibilities for collective input to new developments.

Evidence of change:

- Virtual reality headsets are now being designed to cater towards the needs of city building public consultations in the UK (Thomas, 2018).
- Paris uses Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality to allow citizens to explore their new entertainment and leisure park before it is even built (Smith, 2018).

- Seattle invites residents to explore the changes projected in their city through the use of virtual reality tools (Goldsmith, 2018).

Implications: If residents can experience what is up for debate, there is greater opportunity for people to interact with different ideas and meaningfully engage. VR engagement could also provide greater flexibility in terms of access — as it could be done from a resident’s own home and on their own time — should this technology become commonplace in the future to the point that everyone has their own headset. Access, however, could be a challenge for some Torontonians; therefore, it should not be assumed that this is a viable solution unless there is evidence to suggest that a significant proportion of residents can participate.

➤ Chatbots

Chatbots — artificial intelligence systems designed to function as participants in text-based conversations over the internet — are growing in use by governments as a means to answer resident questions.

Evidence of change:

- The City of London, UK launches a chatbot pilot to answer residents’ New Years Eve questions (Cook, 2018).
- The City of North Charleston becomes the first American city to launch citibot, a chatbot designed to answer 311 questions (City of North Charleston, 2018).
- A north London, UK, borough hires the first robot employee, named Amelia. The city hopes that residents will not notice they are speaking with a robot when calling with questions (Davies, 2016).

Implications: As residents (and governments) become more comfortable interacting with artificial intelligence, there is an opportunity to leverage chatbots for public engagement purposes. Chatbots could aid in participant recruitment, could help answer simple questions, or be used to help frame public

consultation processes.

➤ Personalized Digital Engagement

People want to engage with their government in the same way they engage with other platforms — they want user-friendly, immediate, and personalized experiences. Governments are beginning to pay attention and to deliver consumer-centric digital experiences.

Evidence of change:

- In a 2017 article, the Government of Canada’s Chief Information Officer, questions the current state of government service delivery. He suggests that governments need to adopt a “Government as a Platform” approach to engage citizens (Benay, 2017)
- In Tel Aviv, at the age of 13, every citizen gets access to a “DigiTel” account. The service provides a personalized, interest and location-based digital communication platform for citizens to hear from and engage in dialogue with their local government (Wray, 2016).
- In 2015, Accenture reported that for two-thirds of public service leaders, providing personalized citizen experiences is a top-three priority (Accenture, 2015).

Implications: Reaching residents where they are throughout their busy daily lives, with information that reflects what they care most about, is potentially one of the best things to ensure participation. Digital engagement tools have the potential to be customized and personalized, so that residents see what they want to see, and do not get flooded with information that is not relevant or of interest.

➤ Gamified Engagement

By gamifying city planning and engagement processes, in which citizens can immediately see and understand the value of their contributions, governments are increasing public engagement.

Evidence of change:

- In Salem, MA, “What’s the Point?,” engaged youth in city-planning discussions with a social-media based game that included competing in challenges and responding to trivia questions in exchange for earning donations to local causes (Bray, 2013).
- “Community Planit,” a project of the Engagement Lab at Emerson College, has been used in the US at both the city and national level to engage citizens in government planning projects. Players compete to earn influence to fund local projects through a series of time-limited missions. (Emerson College, 2018).
- The city of Santiago is using gamification to help combat childhood obesity. The application, “Juntos Santiago,” encourages children and their families to make healthy food choices and exercise. Schools take part in health challenges aimed to build good habits and classes compete with one another to earn points and win prizes (Bloomberg Cities, 2017).

Implications: Incentivizing participation in public engagement is one mechanism to increase overall participation. From health apps to language apps, gamifying is an effective means of increasing and maintaining participation in a platform. Digital engagement tools that are able to integrate gamification have the potential to increase participation, especially among new audiences.

➤ Crowdsourcing

Cities are recognizing the payoff of engaging citizens as partners in solving problems and innovating. Crowdsourcing, the practice of enlisting support from large numbers of people using the internet, allows cities to tap into community expertise, understand needs and wants, and engage directly with residents.

Evidence of change:

- The “Public Space Invitational” a crowdsourcing challenge

seeks resident ideas to make three Boston area gardens more “inviting, functional, user-friendly, and fun.” Winners of the challenge received up to \$9,500 to implement their ideas (New Urban Mechanics, 2018).

- When trying to choose an area of focus for 2018, the innovation team in Syracuse, N.Y., turned to the public for help. Residents submitted over 300 ideas — the six most popular ideas were put to public vote to determine the area of focus (Linnett, 2018).
- In Colombia, “MiMedellin,” has received nearly 19,000 ideas from citizens on various challenges. The website solicits solutions to problems, input on policy and decision-making, and ideas for changing or improving the city’s infrastructure (MiMedellin Website, 2018).

Implications: Crowdsourcing offers a new approach to public engagement processes when the topic is at the front-end of decision making. This method is not effective for decisions that are near the approval phase but offers a new way to solicit feedback from residents to support solution design.

OUTLIER TRENDS

The following are trends that are less directly related to public engagement processes but have the potential to dramatically impact how residents can participate in future city building decision-making processes.

➤ Digitally Literate Residents

Digital literacy, the ability to use technology tools and understand how they work, is increasingly important for participating in our personal and professional lives due to the pervasiveness of technology.

Evidence of change:

- The Government of Canada launches a \$50M fund to support coding programs, in a move to increase digital literacy among

youth (Government of Canada, 2017).

- In 2018, the City of Toronto announces its first Digital Literacy Day to celebrate digital literacy programs in the city (StartUp Here, 2018).
- The Ontario government invests \$1M in a digital literacy pilot program aimed at engaging youth aged 12 - 15 from backgrounds currently underrepresented in coding programs (Galang, 2018).

Implications: A digitally literate population will thrive using digital engagement tools. However, those who do not have the basic digital skills required to use future tools will be excluded from public engagement processes.

➤ Digital Detox

Finding ever-so-coveted time to unplug from technology has now become a mainstream concept. From sensory deprivation businesses to a rise in deleting social media accounts, digital detox is a means of re-zeroing in the midst of a constant stream of information stimulation.

Evidence of change:

- England launches a National Unplugging Day to promote taking a break from digital technology (Lyons, 2015).
- Disconnecting from technology completely has been hailed as a healthy way to reduce stress levels in an increasingly connected world. Glued releases Mute Screen Time Tracker, an iOS App available to help people reduce and manage their mobile use (Goldston, 2018).
- Sensory deprivation pods, intended to combat technology addiction become available for commercial, in-home purchase. One luxury Denver apartment building has set up two sensory deprivation tanks for their residents to access (Hudson, 2018).

Implications: If residents are limiting the amount of time they spend using technology, digital engagement tools (which have been gaining in popularity among public engagement

practitioners) may be ineffective at garnering public input. As more residents make conscious decisions to “unplug,” in-person engagement activities may become increasingly important.

➤ Increase in Flexible Work Arrangements

More and more, employees are enjoying a shift away from the traditional 9 to 5 workday to more flexible schedules (Silva, 2018). Whether starting work earlier, later, or condensing overall hours worked, the definition of the workday is no longer standard.

Evidence of change:

- Freelance and entrepreneurs experiment with shifting their workday from 9 - 5 to 1 - 6 to maximize their productivity (Silva, 2018).
- The University of Canterbury introduces flexible work day policies (University of Canterbury, 2017).
- Recent graduates entering the workforce want flexible work days to support work-life balance and time for continued studies (Levit, 2015).

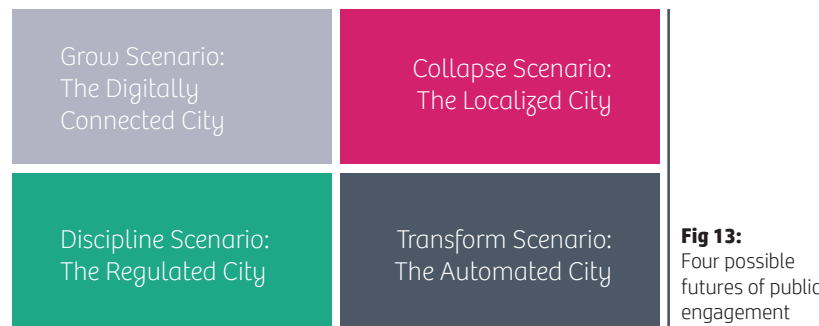
Implications: For working-age residents, the structure of the work day anchors their schedule, dictating when they have time for other activities. If there is no standard work day, it will be challenging to schedule in-person engagement sessions to accommodate varying schedules.

CHAPTER 2

Possible Futures of Public Engagement

The following chapter presents four possible futures of public engagement in 2033. All four scenarios take place in Toronto, and illuminate what could happen based on current trends and broader driving forces. These scenarios are meant to provoke new thinking and to challenge existing assumptions of what public engagement needs to be or look like.

The purpose of these narratives is to explore the broad range of possible futures, so that decision-makers may anticipate and prepare for the effects of the decisions they make today. All of these scenarios are possible; however, none of them is certain.



Instead, the future is plural and it is more likely that it will contain ideas or concepts from each of these scenarios. Ideas that upset, stir, or disrupt currently held beliefs of the reader are useful to examine to understand the underlying cause for those uncomfortable feelings. Challenging long-held beliefs or assumptions can be difficult and feel distressing; however, those assumptions are often preventing new thinking and innovation.

“Any useful idea about the future should appear to be ridiculous.”

Jim Dator, 1995

Trend Dynamics by Scenario

Each of the trends described in Chapter 1 will express themselves differently in each possible future scenario. Below is a breakdown of how each trend will appear in the scenarios presented below. For more information as to how these trends connect to the various scenarios, see Supporting Resources.

TREND	LEGEND			
	G	C	D	T
Declining Trust in Government	↓	-	↑	-
Struggling Civic Literacy	↓	↑	↑	↓
140 Languages and Counting	↑	↓	-	↑
Big Data	↑	↓	-	↑
Power Wielding Government	↑	↓	↑	N/A
Self Organizing Communities	↑	↑	↓	↓
Rise of the Renters	↑	↑	-	-
Suburban Boom	↑	-	-	-
Designing for Resilience	↑	↓	↑	-
Artificial Intelligence & Chatbots	↑	↓	↓	↑
Personalized Digital Engagement	↑	↓	↓	↑
Gamified Engagement	↑	↓	↓	N/A
Crowdsourcing	↑	↑	↓	N/A
Data Privacy Concerns	↑	↓	↓	-
Digital Literate Residents	↑	↓	↓	↑
Digital Detox	↑	N/A	N/A	↓
Increase in Flexible Work Arrangements	↑	↓	↓	N/A

Table 2: Trend dynamics table

In this scenario:

- The population is increasing
- Energy is sufficient
- The economy is dominant and work is flexible
- The environment is conquered
- Technology is accelerating, and investment is prioritized
- Culture is dynamic
- Governance is corporate, and trust is declining
- The internet is omnipresent, and access is growing
- Public engagement is futile



Fig 14:
The digitally connected city
(City of Toronto)

GROW SCENARIO: THE DIGITALLY CONNECTED CITY

Scenario Timeline

2018	Toronto city council shrinks in size to 25 seats, increasing the number of people and geographic area each councillor is responsible for. John Tory is re-elected as mayor of Toronto.
2020	Toronto's Civic Innovation Office closes due to lack of sustainable funding.
2023	The City introduced DigiTO, an online engagement platform that sends push notifications to residents about key city decisions. Originally heralded as "Tinder for democratic processes", residents were provided the opportunity to "swipe right" when they were interested in engaging on a topic, and swipe left when they did not care. Over the years DigiTO grows to become the main mode of communication between government and residents.
2024	3% of Torontonians die despite DigiTO sending notifications to residents to stay home during Ebola outbreak in Ottawa, as many do not have data plans to receive the notification.
2025	Toronto City Council terms are reduced to three years after trust in government reaches all time low.
2028	Free WiFi is implemented city-wide to ensure all residents have access to DigiTO platform.
2029	VR engagement tool pilot canceled after discovery that it causes fewer young people to engage in civic issues than before.
2032	Forum Research study announced showing that, while Torontonians have never received more information about council decisions, fewer are participating in engagement efforts than a decade earlier.

Public Engagement in the Digitally Connected City

It's 2033 and Toronto residents have never had better access to city-level decision making. Through digital engagement platforms, easily accessed using free city-wide WiFi, all residents have the opportunity to participate in civic life. And yet, very few do.

City councillors regularly send communication to residents using the municipality's personalized digital app, DigiTO, sending notifications of what is happening in the city, key decisions being made, and to flag critical alerts. This was especially useful during an Ebola outbreak in Ottawa, as DigiTO was used to notify residents to stay home while infectious disease control measures were being put in place. Unfortunately, without cellular data plans, some residents did not receive the notifications. This led to the deaths of many Torontonians. Other than a ban on Dr. Chatbots, the main outcome of this tragedy was the implementation of free city-wide WiFi to ensure all residents had access to future DigiTO notifications.

While the majority of Torontonians open the DigiTO app on a daily basis, a recent Forum Research study found that few pay much attention to the information shared by the City. Ever since the Toronto Star & Mail published a story about how councillors were using microtargeting to engage specific residents in decisions — leaving out those they knew would disagree — trust in the platform has declined significantly. The Forum Research study found that residents think their input is not actually applied to decisions, and therefore continue to use DigiTO more so for weather and traffic updates than anything else.

City staff, who have gained more authority and prestige since council terms were reduced to 3 years, have been working to better understand how they may improve citizen engagement. Since the Civic Innovation Office closed over a decade ago, there has not been a dedicated group focused on studying engagement efforts. When funding ran out, staff from the Civic Innovation Office leaked their engagement transformation plan, which

What is the purpose of public engagement?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To build trust in government • To get buy-in from residents
Who is public engagement for?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy makers • Political leaders
What does public engagement look and feel like for residents?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital first approach • Frequent and habitual • Personalized
How are public engagement outputs used?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are not used
Who participates in public engagement?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only a small portion of the population • Mainly older, wealthier residents
How do residents feel about public engagement?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disenfranchised and apathetic

continues to be the basis for engagement strategies today, despite being very outdated.

While most engagement efforts have focused on DigiTO, other tools have been tested over the years. When a large chunk of the Gardiner Expressway fell, killing 9 Torontonians in 2022, the city launched a crowdsourcing tool to collect residents' ideas for how to replace the highway. The thinking was that government needed residents to help make a decision about what to do — since politicians had been unable to agree on a plan for the Gardiner since 2014. Unfortunately, many of the ideas put forward were not viable engineering possibilities, leading decision makers to implement an idea first proposed in 2016 by then-chief planner, Jennifer Keesmaat. Unsurprisingly, the crowdsourcing platform has not been used much since.

Another engagement pilot was tested five years ago, in hopes of including a younger demographic in civic life. This initiative included a virtual-reality engagement platform that helped

residents experience development plans before they were built. While this tool was a huge hit with many older residents, younger Torontonians found the technology outdated. In 2030 the pilot was scrapped after an evaluation found that it actually led to less engagement among Torontonians 15-30 years old.

Behind-the-times investments have been a key characteristic in Toronto since Toronto council size was reduced to 25 seats. Councillors' now-oversized portfolios meant that it was difficult to address key issues. While the cost of housing in the city continued to become more and more prohibitive for most, and flexibility grew among employers for teams to work remotely, many residents left the city, opting to live in more affordable towns. This has since had detrimental impacts on Toronto's tax base, which has been the main issue in the last three elections.

In 2029, mayor Mitzie Hunter won on the platform to incentivize working-age residents to move back to the city, only to be ousted 3 years later by mayor Adam Vaughan who committed to increasing public-private partnerships to fund failing city services. The latest DigiTO polls show that Torontonians are beginning to wonder whether the 3-year council term, and the resulting flip-flopping policies, has been the wisest move.

Despite many residents working remotely, people still engage in regular in-person activities. During the 2023 Digital Blackout, when all major telecommunication firms were hacked, causing all digital systems to go down, the impromptu parties that happened in parks across the city led many to appreciate the value of disconnecting from their devices on a regular basis. So while residents have never been more digitally connected to one another and city decision-makers, designated digital-free time is a regular part of every resident's daily life. Recently, there has been a resident-led campaign to block city WiFi in parks and other public spaces. This proposal has received very little support from City staff, who worry that it would also compromise DigiTO's ability to reach residents in times of need. WiFi connectedness has in fact become a matter of public safety.

In this scenario:

- The population is declining
- Energy is scarce
- The economy is survival and work is aspirational
- The environment is overshot
- Technology is stagnating, and investment is unusual
- Culture is stable
- Governance is local, and trust is neutral
- The internet is separate, and access is sporadic
- Public Engagement is routine



Fig 15:
The localized city
(Mali Maeder)

COLLAPSE SCENARIO: THE LOCALIZED CITY

Scenario Timeline

2020	Floods render Toronto's islands unliveable and leads to the closing of Billy Bishop airport. Research studying weather projections shows a looming threat of floods predicted to impact most of the downtown core; Toronto redoubles its sustainability efforts.
2022	Premier Ford is re-elected with strong support from homeowners across Ontario.
2026	A prominent urban planner runs for council and wins on the platform of empowering local governance by expanding their control over neighbourhood development, business development, and local public services.
2027	Community neighbourhood councils begin a bi-annual process of neighbourhood planning, generating neighbourhood plans that provide direction to City Council.
2028	The Toronto Community Data Program (CDP) launches, which makes resident data available to all Torontonians for the purpose of developing solutions to local problems.
2031	Residents begin to move to neighbourhoods with plans that are more relevant to their values and visions of community. Largely homogenous communities are formed, each with a different profile and set of priorities.

Public Engagement in the Localized City

It's 2033 and increasing independence in neighbourhoods across the city has created a new political landscape in Toronto. From zoning bylaws for laneway homes to the design of recycling receptacles, crossing from one neighbourhood to another reflects the ideological differences of the residents who live there. Residents influence every detail of their community through highly-localized neighbourhood councils.

The existence of neighbourhood councils has freed up Toronto city councillors to spend their energy advocating on behalf of Torontonians at the provincial level. This became a priority activity when several decisions of Premier Ford's 2018-2026 Progressive Conservative administration were perceived by many to disproportionately impact Torontonians. For instance, many Torontonians blamed the removal of the Cap and Trade program for the flooding of the Toronto islands and decommissioning of Billy Bishop Airport.

Since 2019, Toronto has also seen several peaks in opioid poisoning deaths, which Ryerson University researchers linked to both Ontario's lack of safe injection sites and the lack of adequate regulation of cannabis products post-legalization. This research, which shed light on the disproportionate impacts on people of lower socioeconomic status, was met with community outrage, especially in Toronto's dense neighbourhoods. This outcry gave Caroline Farsco, an up and coming urban planner turned mayoral candidate, the perfect environment for her 2026 platform to increase the influence of neighbourhood councils on local decision-making.

Farsco's mayoral victory resulted in the development of a functional structure for localized government, allowing council to shift focus on building Toronto's municipal resilience to provincial overreach. This effort was sidetracked when the provincial government made a second reduction to Toronto city council, and city councillors became responsible for representing

What is the purpose of public engagement?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding needs and supporting development of cooperative values
Who is public engagement for?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-op residents
What does public engagement look and feel like for residents?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consensus-based discussions
How are public engagement outputs used?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To inform cooperative values
Who participates in public engagement?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone, especially youth
How do residents feel about public engagement?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaged and important

on average 150,000 residents per ward. This change also made it challenging for recommendations put forward by neighbourhood councils to be implemented, which led to the erosion of trust of both municipal and provincial governments.

Distrust in government led residents to establish

the Toronto Community Data Program (CDP), which made resident data available to all Torontonians for the purpose of developing solutions to local problems. Access to up-to-date data on Toronto residents was the beginning of a local governance revolution. Organizations like Civic Tech Toronto excelled during this time, leveraging available data to develop tailored solutions which met the needs of Toronto communities. Many of these solutions made their way into neighbourhood plans, which were part of a bi-annual planning process established by Farsco as a means for neighbourhood councils to communicate their intentions to city council.

After the first two cycles of neighbourhood plan submissions, City Council believed it had a clear sense of what mattered most to different communities. Common to many of these plans were concerns related to community safety, sexual violence, environmental sustainability, harm reduction, and street safety. However, this knowledge was brought into question after it became evident that several single-interest activist groups had claimed seats on neighbourhood councils, affecting neighbourhood plans. As a result, City Council announced this year that they are putting the planning process under review, as it is evident that it is not representing the majority voice of residents.

During their time of use, neighbourhood plans have been a means for neighbourhoods to communicate their shared values, which motivated many Torontonians to relocate to the community they most closely aligned with. Overtime this results in tensions between neighbouring residents, who struggle to relate to one another. Some residents found themselves unable to identify with any particular community, and faced mounting pressure to affiliate. This resulted in many Torontonians with minority voices to leave the city all together, settling in suburban areas where these issues had less influence over their day-to-day lives.

Every now and then a new neighbourhood council forms and separates from its former council to better differentiate the needs of people which are obscured by larger council priorities. Slowly some former Torontonians are moving back, although many still feel that Toronto has become too localized, and neighbourhood association too politicized.

The new structure for decision-making allows neighbourhood councils the freedom to affect development and policy in their neighbourhoods. Although inter-neighbourhood clashes create tensions at times, this form of local governance is the first in Toronto to provide a substantial voice to permanent residents, refugees, and other non-citizens who have the ability to join councils. It has changed the face of municipal elections, differentiating effectively between the purposes of electing both mayors and councillors, and providing entry to local elections by those who have never before been engaged.

Toronto, like all Canadian cities, continues to be impacted by unilateral decisions at federal and provincial levels, but there are indications that a secession may be in the works. Though Torontonians are hopeful at the possibility of being free of the growing precedent for provincial interference, it is uncertain whether all the hurdles to independence can be overcome. Though Toronto has scared off many potential economic opportunities due to its ever-changing unpredictable political landscape, for now, Toronto celebrates that those who live here feel heard.

In this scenario:

- The population is diminished
- Energy is limited
- The economy is regulated and work is stipulated
- The environment is sustainable
- Technology is restricted, and investment is intentional
- Culture is focused
- Governance is strict, and trust is unquestioned
- The internet is controlled, and access is restricted
- Public engagement is imposed

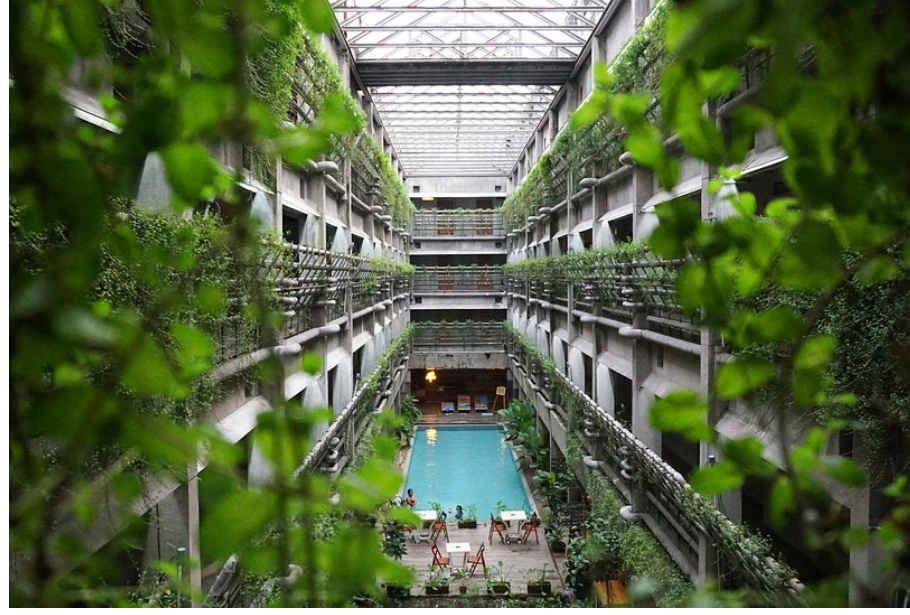


Fig 16:
The regulated city
(saesherra)

DISCIPLINE SCENARIO: THE REGULATED CITY

Scenario Timeline

2020	City council is unable to obtain funding for the City of Toronto's Resilience strategy, which includes measure to mitigate the effects of climate-related events.
2021	Major ice storm — Freezing rain falls for over 100 hours, six inches of ice accumulate, and causes extensive damage to trees and electrical infrastructure which leads to long-term power outages. In the end, over 2000 deaths have been attributed to the storm.
2023	Responding to concerns from the Ice Storm, the newly elected New Democratic Party and Liberal Party Coalition government introduce the Ontario Sustainability Act. The city of Toronto, the largest producer of CO2 emission in the province, is given a large grant to incentivize alternative energy projects and green city projects like green building and roofs and park developments. While these reforms are being discussed in the House of Commons, another ice storm hits Toronto. While not as serious as the storm of 2021, resident's frustration with the provincial government is at an all time high.
2024	Mayor Bailao threatens a referendum on secession given mounting frustration with the province's insufficient support for extreme weather. Polls suggest that as many as 65% of Torontonians are now in favour of separating from the province. Recognizing the political ramifications that would result from such a referendum, the provincial government agrees to reform CoTA to provide more autonomy to the City.

2026	Toronto city council unanimously votes to install a new municipal taxation program, which includes residency permits for anyone wishing to relocate to the city. This unprecedented vote comes as a result of an ongoing struggle to deliver effective services to residents with available funds given focus on sustainability programs.
2027	Given mounting concerns with transparency in government processes, the Powerful People Act is introduced by three city councilors at Toronto City Hall, which outlines mandatory requirements and processes for municipal public engagement. Drawing from ancient Athenian participatory government processes, residents, chosen through a careful process to ensure proper representation, serve on Resident Engagement Committees to inform city building decisions.
2029	Introduction of the mandatory sustainability service post-high school is well received after a successful two year pilot and study. Participants rotate through three posts over 24 months in their top three matches which helps inform their professional placement afterwards. Also during this year, the city bans all petrol and diesel vehicles.

Public Engagement in the Regulated City

It's 2033 in Toronto, the economy is growing and the city is considered a world leader in greentech and the green labour market. The city is globally renowned for its approach to sustainable urban development — yet, despite the accolades it receives in the ecospace, Toronto also faces harsh criticisms for strict regulations imposed by the municipal government that control many aspects of life for residents.

While not fully independent from the Province of Ontario, Toronto enjoys more autonomy than any other city in the country and currently operates under a "Regulated Participatory Democracy," where residents are legislated to work in tandem

What is the purpose of public engagement?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To maintain trust in government • To understand resident needs for policy decisions • To ensure resident compliance with societal regulations
Who is public engagement for?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The municipal government
What does public engagement look and feel like for residents?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory and legislated • Formulaic process • Clearly scope and transparent • Residents rotate through engagement processes
How are public engagement outputs used?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To inform decisions, but not necessarily to define decisions • Government is transparent about how outputs are used
Who participates in public engagement?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representational groups selected by government
How do residents feel about public engagement?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Useful and dutiful

with city officials to inform decisions impacting all aspects of city life. Resident advisors, mandated to participate on Resident Engagement Committees (REC), are carefully selected to ensure that membership on the committee is representative for the issue being considered. RECs provide clear terms of engagement to residents from the outset, including time frame, scope, and the level of influence the REC will have on decision-making.

Toronto's current unique governance model was made possible when then-mayor Ana Bailao championed a movement that led to major amendments to the City of Toronto Act (CoTA) in

2024, which are still in place today. Under the revised CoTA, Toronto was given more control of the city's governance and electoral systems, school board, and receives a percentage of the provincial tax base to fund infrastructure projects and city services. The reform to CoTA was widely criticized by conservative politicians, but the government in power at the time, Horwath's New Democratic Party (NDP), understood that it was necessary to placate Toronto residents who had begun mobilizing a secession movement given frustration with lack of provincial leadership on climate change initiatives.

Toronto has managed to maintain its title as the "most diverse city in the world", while also implementing one of the strictest immigration policies. Residency permits are now required for residents wishing to live within the boundaries of the city. The lengthy application process carefully screens applicants to maintain diversity. Successful applicants are assigned to a neighbourhood based on their demographic data and skill sets. Relocation permits are available to residents living in the city who wish to move to a new neighbourhood. Demand for residency permits continues to grow, despite Toronto's uncharacteristically high taxes.

This permitting system is part of a broader municipal taxation program introduced five years after Toronto's largest climate disaster, allowed the city to begin addressing crumbling infrastructure and suffering public programs. Despite warnings from meteorologists, Toronto was wildly underprepared for the scale of the ice storm that hit in 2021. Emergency funding was extremely slow to arrive from the provincial government and the result was extensive and long-lasting damage to the city's roads, transit system, hydro, and telecommunications systems.

Later that year Toronto, under direction from the Federal government, accepted a high number of climate refugees from the Caribbean, where the category five Hurricane Ida had levelled entire cities. This influx of people put strain on the social and physical infrastructure in the city and exacerbated an already

dire situation in Toronto. The permit system enabled the city to close its borders and build up a reserve of funding by reducing the sheer number of people accessing social services, while increasing a range of municipal taxes for existing residents. The saved dollars, and new tax revenue was redirected to rebuild key infrastructure over the next decade. While this remains a very dark time in Toronto's history, some of the decisions made during the rebuilding period were transformative for the city.

Internet infrastructure was among the worst hit and, given the enormous costs associated with replacing fibre optics, was quickly dropped down the priority list of repairs. An exception was made for municipal innovation labs and locally-owned businesses working in the sustainability space, which the government worked to get back in service swiftly. This investment enabled major technological developments in the greentech space. When researchers at the University of Toronto released their five-year study of the natural digital detox, it revealed improved rates of depression and interpersonal functionality, as well as an increase in sense of community. This study made the City's decision to limit personal Internet use easy and, because residents had grown accustomed to very little access, there was little resistance.

While there are many examples of how CoTA has propelled Toronto to its current position, the introduction of mandatory public engagement service for residents has been the most transformative. After the new municipal taxation programs were introduced, Torontonians were concerned about how the city was using their tax dollars, fearing that adequate supports would not be available during the next climate change related crisis. To repair the relationship with the city's residents, the City of Toronto undertook an extensive consultation process to co-develop a new governance model. As a result, the Resident Engagement Committees (REC) were, serving as the mechanism for councillors and residents to make collaborative city building decisions. To date, over 760,000 Torontonians have participated in mandatory RECs and participation in government decision-

making is at an all-time high, particularly for marginalized communities who are highly engaged.

Toronto's current sustainability culture and economy can be traced back to the introduction of the Sustainable Ontario Act, which led to establishing a small city-run lab — SustainTO — to focus on developing innovations in energy conservation and efficiency. SustainTO has expanded to several sites across Toronto and is now the city's largest employer. The city also introduced Green Development Guidelines which impose sustainability requirements for new developments. All of these early programs and policies set the stage for the introduction of household carbon and water quotas, which, as the outcome of the first REC, currently help to manage consumption in the city.

Today, sustainability has become the new world order for Toronto and is a source of pride for residents. The economy has managed to grow, thanks to SustainTO labs producing some of the world's most innovative greentech. The City is able to invest in sustainable developments, including a fully funded comprehensive city-wide free transit system. The transit system has been funded in part from the green transpo permit — required for all modes of personal transport.

In return for these strict limitations, Torontonians have access to one of the highest quality education systems in the country, housing subsidies, free transit, and no waitlists for social services. While the majority of residents feel that they are of service to their city, there are still people who are resistant to the new governance model and refuse to perform their mandatory REC obligation, believing that it is the municipality's role to govern the city.

In this scenario:

- The population is posthuman
- Energy is abundant
- The economy is trivial and work is extinct
- The environment is artificial
- Technology is transformative, and investment is automatic
- Culture is complex
- Governance is direct, and trust is irrelevant
- The internet is merged, and access is ubiquitous
- Public engagement is obsolete



Fig 17:
The automated city
(Min An)

TRANSFORM SCENARIO: THE AUTOMATED CITY

Scenario Timeline

2019	Given frustration during contract negotiation with Ontario's teachers, the provincial government enacts laws to reduce the power of all public sector unions operating at provincial and municipal levels. This opens door to Toronto piloting 311 Chatbots (CityBots) in three city departments.
2022	Don Valley East residents follow the lead of Taipei and Mumbai, electing the 1st A.I. city councillor (WardBot16) to represent Ward 16 and former Sidewalk Labs senior employee is elected Toronto mayor, on the platform of automating city services.
2023	A team of displaced city workers create CityView, an engagement platform allowing all residents to view real-time updates on major city-related decisions, in response to resident frustration. The team work with CityBots to launch the platform.
2030	Michael Ford runs for mayor on platform to disband the Mega-city but loses to the world's first AI Mayor, LeaderBot. LeaderBot's commits to operating government openly via CityView so that all residents have the opportunity to view and understand decision-making processes.
2033	Toronto makes historic move to cancel 2034 municipal election.

Public Engagement in the Automated City

It's 2033 and Toronto is governed and operated by an integrated A.I. platform called CityView, and residents have never been more satisfied. So much so, the upcoming municipal election has just been canceled, as residents no longer see reason to elect government officials.

This shift can be traced back to a provincial decision in 2018 to reduce city council size from 44 to 25. After the workload of city councillors doubled, many found themselves unable to respond to residents' needs in a timely manner, and without the resources to explore smarter ways of operating.

After Don Valley East residents were unable to contact their councillor during a major flood in 2020, they elected Toronto's first A.I. city councillor, WardBot16. The A.I. councillor was able to participate at city council while simultaneously responding to all constituent inquiries, and also running algorithms to analyze incoming data. Better still, residents were able to see what WardBot16 was processing in real-time, creating a new level of transparency.

Other city councillors attempted to keep up by wearing Go-Pro cameras to livestream their actions to constituents. When WardBot16 was able to successfully move the council to ban single-passenger cars in the downtown area based on extensive economic, environmental and social data, Toronto residents knew a new age of governance had begun.

Of course WardBot16, and all the other WardBots that followed after the election in 2026, would have been ineffective without the platform they rely on — CityView. CityView was the product of what many felt was the scariest change in the history of Ontario — when Premier Ford reduced the power of all provincial and municipal unions in 2019. This law, as shocking as it was at the time, made it possible to replace city workers with chatbots (CityBots) capable of answering residents' "311" information questions. Not only did this help residents become accustomed to interfacing with the government via machines, it also forced

What is the purpose of public engagement?	• Optimization of city services
Who is public engagement for?	• Bots
What does public engagement look and feel like for residents?	• Automatic and ubiquitous data collection
How are public engagement outputs used?	• To optimize city services
Who participates in public engagement?	• Everyone, knowingly or unknowingly
How do residents feel about public engagement?	• Fine and/or apathetic

many displaced workers to enroll in the FutureSkills training program.

CityView was created by several workers displaced by CityBots, after they completed FutureSkills computer science and experience-design courses. Experts believe the effectiveness of CityView is a direct result of the founders' in-depth understanding of how government works.

While CityView is not actively used by residents today, it is easy to forget how important it was in helping transition to the current government model. When first introduced, CityView was simply a platform where residents could see, in real time, what was happening with major city decisions. In fact, the first prototype only tracked public engagement processes. But as Toronto became a "Smart City", more data became available from city services, and CityView became more and more comprehensive.

CityView really gained public support in 2025 when it was able to gather residents' feedback within 24 hours, using CityBots, to determine the preferred response for protecting the city from the infectious disease outbreaks in Ottawa. The efficiency of CityView saved the lives of Torontonians, something still celebrated every year on May 31.

When CityView was updated in 2026 to become fully customized to residents' individual preferences and issues of interest, it became easier to weigh in on the decisions that mattered. Once paired with free city-wide WiFi (rolled out that same year), all residents gained full access to government decision-making in a customized, digestible manner.

However, when CityView was hacked in 2027 by three former city staff, thousands of residents had their data usage made public, unveiling individuals' historical voting decisions. Perhaps most noteworthy was the discovery that former Toronto mayor, John Tory, just last year voted in favour of burying the Gardiner

Expressway — something he had fought against in earlier years.

When people began to punish and ostracize each other for past decisions, CityView responded instantly by pushing notifications to each resident demonstrating the system upgrades implemented to prevent future hacks. For many residents, this is when they knew they could trust CityView to govern Toronto.

Of course, not everyone was happy with the shift to automated government. This was made clear when remaining human city councillors attempted to reinstate Toronto's 6 pre-amalgamated boundaries (East York, Etobicoke, North York, Scarborough, York, and the City of Toronto), so that decision-making could go back to the old ways. While even a few WardBots supported this move, Premier Mike Layton stepped in at the last minute to veto the decision. In a last-ditch effort, Michael Ford ran for mayor on this campaign platform alone in 2030. When it was discovered he was engaged in conversations with Amazon to establish a new corporate city called Amazon-Etobicoke, his public support skyrocketed in Etobicoke (given the promise of new employment options), but declined elsewhere. Instead, Toronto made history by electing the first ever A.I. mayor (known as LeaderBot), who has since transitioned all city decisions to CityView. Given residents' unhappiness with the Premier interfering with data-based decisions at the municipal level, Torontonians pushed to automate Ontario's elected officials.

Since 2031, CityView has seen a rapid decline in usage. Several WardBots flagged concern last year, which led to the hiring of Google-Deloitte to study this issue further. This report showed that residents no longer believed they needed to pay attention to what was happening within government, as the best decision will be made on their behalf given the personal data they make available.

When LeaderBot proposes canceling Toronto's 2034 municipal election based on the most recently available data, few residents are surprised. Given the serious nature of this decision, CityView pings all residents to confirm their data sources, but only receives a response from 3% of Torontonians.

CHAPTER 3

Considerations and Areas for Influence

What do these possible futures mean for today's current state of affairs? This is where the "strategic" part of "strategic foresight" comes into play. A core principle of this practice is that it is most useful to consider possible futures if a strategy is then created to move towards a preferred future. In order to do that, it is critical that a preferred future be articulated. There are numerous tools that are helpful in this regard — such as backcasting — but, as mentioned during the introduction, this is beyond the scope of this work.

In the absence of an articulated preferred vision for the future, the following insights have been extracted from the four scenarios to illustrate how decisions made today could impact possible futures. The intent of these insights is to provide a useful starting point for future strategic planning exercises and undertakings.

No matter what the future has in store, civic literacy programs are important. If residents do not understand how government works, they will not participate in the decision-making process. The future of Toronto is reliant on decisions made with residents engaged. The importance of civic literacy cannot be overstated.

Digital engagement tools require digital skills and internet access. There are plenty of reasons to be excited about the role that digital engagement tools could play to support future public

engagement efforts. However, digital tools will not solve civic literacy problems. Furthermore, these tools require a level of digital literacy that should not be assumed of residents. They also typically require that residents have access to the internet. Before embracing digital engagement tools, attention should be paid to ensuring all residents have access to the internet, as well as the basic digital literacy skills needed to participate.

Consider that in-person meetings could become a refreshing alternative to our digital lives. While it may become increasingly challenging to schedule in-person engagement activities with the shift in work days and lifestyles, there could be a growing appetite for face-to-face interaction among residents in the future. What role could neighbourhood walks, talks, and community gatherings play in fostering much needed community connections?

Develop a new perspective on inclusion. The tendency when attempting to be inclusive is to include all people. Volume 1 of this research demonstrates people are more likely to be engaged when they experience connection to community, neighborhood belonging, and investment in the future. In this Volume, a future perspective demonstrates the importance of being selectively inclusive, reaching the right people, building community, and investment in a common future. To do this, a future for public engagement includes the development of a coordinated vision for Toronto.

CHAPTER 4

Areas for Future Study

The world in which public engagement exists is changing rapidly, pushing practitioners to evolve and consider new approaches. This document outlines a range of trends impacting the future of public engagement, and how the future could look when these trends interact and mature. Based on the ideas presented, considerations are described with the goal of providing tangible next steps for public servants to activate.

While the trends and scenarios have been tested and validated by research participants, the considerations would benefit from additional discussion and study. In order to prioritize efforts around these considerations, a specific goal and preferred future state for city building related public engagement in Toronto must be articulated. Do we want more people to engage? Better access to communities traditionally underrepresented in public engagement? Or, perhaps the preferred future is less formal engagement, and instead more everyday opportunities for feedback? Articulating Toronto's desired future for public engagement is a critical next step for this discussion, to ensure that the choices made today are intentionally moving the city towards the future we all want.

VOLUME 2

Supporting Resources

Recommendations for Auditing an Engagement Process

The following chart outlines the expert recommendations uncovered in Volume 1 of this research project (please refer to Chapter 2 for more detail about each category of expert recommendation). As you plan a public engagement process, use this chart to indicate how you intend to achieve recommendations. Revisit this chart to assess if you were able to achieve each recommendation.

Scenario Development Tools

Dator's Generic Images of the Future Drivers:

The following are the forces defined by Dator to be used to create the Grow, Collapse, Discipline and Transform scenario. Regardless of the topic, these forces do not change and are meant to provide a basis for scenario development (Dator, 2009).

Table 3:
Dator's Generic Images' Drivers

Forces	Grow	Collapse	Discipline	Transform
Population	Increasing	Declining	Diminished	Posthuman
Energy	Sufficient	Scarce	Limited	Abundant
Economy	Dominant	Survival	Regulated	Trivial
Environment	Conquered	Overshot	Sustainable	Artificial
Culture	Dynamic	Stable	Focused	Complex
Technology	Accelerating	Stagnating	Restricted	Transformative
Governance	Corporate	Local	Strict	Direct

The following are forces created through the collective scenarios process to understand how different trends would express themselves in the four scenarios. These forces were created by extrapolating the drivers of change from each of the originally identified 44 trends, and mapping the drivers based on their importance and uncertainty. The forces listed below are those which are most uncertain and most important.

Table 4:
Drivers of public engagement in Toronto

Forces	Grow	Collapse	Discipline	Transform
Nature of work	Flexible	Aspirational	Stipulated	Extinct
Social Consciousness	Dynamic	Ingrained	Systematized	Human-centred
Individualism	Increasing	Communal	Diminished	Interconnected
Loneliness	Inevitable	Diminishing	Managed	Eliminated
The Internet	Omnipresent	Separate/distinct	Controlled	Merged
Gender Inequality	Diminished	Exacerbated	Levelled	Inconsequential
Trust in Gov	Declining	Neutral	Unquestioned	Irrelevant
Citizenship	Politicized	Community-based	Legislated	Global
Investment in tech	Prioritized	Unusual	Intentional	Automatic
News sources	Everyone	Unimportant	Restricted	Trustworthy
Internet Access	Growing	Sporadic	Restricted	Ubiquitous
Personal Security	Uncertain	Irrelevant	Assured	Prestigious
Political Polarization	Growing	Subdued	Eliminated	Pluralistic

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VOLUME 3

Building Collective Scenarios

Limitations of the study

This Volume provides a variation on a collaborative approach to scenario generation and, while the approach worked well in our project, it should be noted that this method has been tested with a limited sample size and requires further validation. We endeavoured to involve participants as much as possible throughout the method, however there are elements in the process that were driven by the research team. Further limitations of collective scenarios are discussed in Chapter 3.

INTRODUCTION

When we began this research, we proposed to uncover a way to create more meaningful interactions between residents and local government. After developing a deep understanding of the history and current context of public engagement, we discovered that, for residents, meaning was derived from several factors that required consideration throughout public engagement processes. Generally, practitioners are aware and try to account for these factors, however many of the persistent challenges associated with public engagement are systemic and outside of the realm of influence and control of practitioners.

Rather than focus on improving interactions between residents and government in public engagement processes — where there is already a well-established body of research — we determined that a strategic foresight exploration of the possibilities for the futures of public engagement held the most potential to disrupt and challenge the way we think about, and conceptualize, public engagement and the role that residents play in how cities are shaped. Ultimately, we hope that these future possibilities might catalyze public servants to initiate truly transformative change towards more collaborative public engagement processes.

Moving into a foresight exploration of the futures of public engagement in 2033, it was critical to continue with a participatory approach and invite key stakeholders to explore the future together. As experts of their lived experience with public engagement, these stakeholders — residents, public servants, and practitioners — would provide valuable input, as co-creators, to ensure the development of robust and legitimate futures.

Given that there is limited use of strategic foresight in local government, rather than produce a preferred future for public engagement, we wanted to give our audience — public servants — a range of distinct possibilities to consider.

Our approach to scenario development emerged organically

and wove together foresight tools and processes in an iterative fashion. This process, which we refer to as collective scenarios, uses familiar foresight tools that have been modified and combined in a unique sequence for collaborative scenario generation.

Using gamification, collective scenarios invites stakeholders to contribute narrative pieces to a worldbuilding exercise grounded in a deductive scenario development method. Participants generate micro-scenarios that describe succinct visions of the future in a quick and engaging game. The following Volume describes this process in detail, with the intent of sharing lessons learned and eliciting feedback from the broader futures community.

How to Use This Volume

The following volume is divided into six chapters and provides information related to how the collective scenarios process evolved. The first chapter outlines the **background and context** within which collective scenarios was designed. Following this, the second chapter provides an **overview of the design process** and the third chapter provides an outline of **how to use the collective scenarios process**. In the fourth chapter, we comment on the **contributions** that this evolved process, collective scenarios, makes to the fields of strategic foresight, design research, and public engagement. In the final chapter, we explore potential **future applications** for collective scenarios.

This document is for intended foresight practitioners of any level interested in learning about or trying a variation on scenario development, or for public servants looking for ways to integrate strategic foresight in their work. The intent is to provide context on the development of the process, tangible steps for applying the process, and to provide a critique related to how well collective scenarios incorporated principles of public engagement.

How This Volume Was Created

The ideas and content described below were generated using the following tools and processes:

- A comprehensive **Horizon Scan**, that used two conceptual frameworks (**STEEP-V and Verge**) to organize 130+ signals into 44 trends.
- A **Wildcard Event** brainstorm that resulted in 39 Wildcard events for the city of Toronto, with varying degrees of possibility and impact.
- These **Trends** and Wildcard Events became the foundation for the development of a foresight card game, called 'In the Event.'
- Two **Generative Workshops** were held with a mix of stakeholder to play 'In the Event' — these workshops generated a total of 77 **micro-scenarios**
- **Jim Dator's Generic Images of the Future (Generic Images)** was used to create distinct worlds within which the micro-scenarios were later plotted
- Key **Drivers of Change** were identified and described for each of the four Generic Images
- **Influence Mapping** was used to ensure that the worlds built with generic images were logically sound

CHAPTER 1

Background and Context

Our research identified a need to elevate discussions about public engagement beyond the current focus — on the event itself — to enable stakeholders to envision how public engagement may be completely transformed in the future. Given that persistent challenges with public engagement processes are deeply rooted systemic challenges, foresight provides tools to understand the range of possible futures and therefore the required shifts to create visible change.

There has been much effort and attention — by researchers, practitioners, public servants, and others — to improve the design of public engagement processes and events. These stakeholders have generated a wealth of published expertise about how to create inclusive, accessible, and effective public engagement events. This is, undeniably, a critical aspect for creating meaningful public engagements for residents, however it does not address the more significant challenges that persist at the systems level.

Public servants are uniquely positioned to work collaboratively with residents to re-imagine the futures of public engagement and develop strategic actions to move toward a preferred future.

Foresight for Cities

As demonstrated in Volume 1, most current public engagement processes ask residents to participate from a position relative to an issue — meaning that they are likely to provide input that protects their personal stake or status. This diverts efforts away

Table 5:
Benefits of
City Foresight

Exposing local strengths	Creative exploration of long-term aspirations and policy options brings fresh perspectives on unique local assets, as well as the ways by which these can combine into a distinct future city brand and identity
Enhancing resilience	Collaborative sense checking of assumptions about future change leads to early identification of risk and builds relationships that enhance cities' capacities to cope with change and disruption
Strategy refinement	Increased clarity and alignment of place-specific aspirations, local assets, opportunities, and enhanced awareness of risks yield more robust strategic 'roadmaps' towards the future
Investor confidence	Active shaping by city leadership of future trajectories fosters external confidence in a city's management of its assets and risk. Compelling narratives about a city's long-term prospects further enhance its attractiveness to businesses and skilled workers
Strategic partnerships	Joint identification of future business and development opportunities across wider geographies builds coalitions and leads to greater data sharing and closer alignment of cities' policies
Tackling challenges	The future provides a safe space for engaging with persistent, politically charged challenges
Civic engagement	Creative engagement with public provides opportunities to demonstrate city leadership qualities and enhance civic pride

from engaging residents in more visionary projects or processes in which their values, beliefs, interests, and expectations are sought.

At the federal level in Canada, strategic foresight methods are fairly well-established in the development of public policy (Jones, 2017), however local governments do not necessarily have the capabilities or resources to conduct foresight studies. Cities are dynamic systems, full of stakeholders with competing priorities — this constant tension and flux make a city's future uncertain. Municipal governments are uniquely positioned to engage residents on a deeper level and enable more meaningful conversations to build resilient and people-centred policies,

“Designing the future shape of the city can be a discipline practised by many, rather than an art mastered by few.”

John Goddard, Emeritus Professor of Regional Development Studies, Newcastle University

communities, and ultimately, cities. Ideally, foresight “integrates long-term planning, multi-stakeholder dialogue and the idea of shaping the future by influencing public policy and strategic decisions” (Jenssen, 2009).

Strategic Foresight provides municipalities an opportunity to draw residents into planning processes to help envision a shared future, thereby increasing levels of resident engagement, building relationships between government and residents, and ultimately to restore trust in government (Jenssen, 2009; Jones, 2017; United Kingdom Government Office for Science, 2016). There are many advantages for cities considering implementing a foresight process and in their toolkit ‘Future of Cities: Foresight for Cities’, the United Kingdom Government Office for Science (2016), outlines the benefits of city foresight, as seen in Table 5.

Participatory Foresight

It is widely accepted that there is no single way to conduct a strategic foresight study (Hanssen, Johnstad, Klausen, 2009; Jenssen, 2009; Jones, 2017; Nikolova, 2013; Popper, 2008). There are multitudes of tools and frameworks available to foresight practitioners, but it remains a purposefully flexible practice that continues to evolve.

Historically, foresight has been considered an exclusive practice requiring participants to possess expert knowledge; however, there has been momentum to open the process to more diverse participants and viewpoints (Hanssen, Johnstad, Klausen, 2009; Jones, 2017; Perna, 2017). While experts bring a certain level of knowledge and understanding that is critical for guiding futures research, broadening participation to include stakeholders who have traditionally been excluded from foresight has the potential to uncover more profound insights and to legitimize future scenarios (Nikolova, 2013; UNDP Global Centre for Public Service Excellence, 2018).

Despite the more traditional approach to foresight, participatory or collaborative foresight processes are not new. There are many

examples of strategic foresight processes designed to include non-traditional players. The language describing these types of foresight methods are as varied as the methods themselves. Some of the more common descriptors include: participatory, inclusive, collaborative, and open.

In his 1970 book, 'Future Shock,' Alvin Toffler first introduced the idea of democratizing futures studies by suggesting that — in order to adapt to a rapidly changing world — individuals would need to learn to anticipate the future. Since then many futurists have followed, advocating for strengthening participation in foresight by broadening the range of stakeholders who are included.

Amara (1981) described future scenarios as a reflection of people's values, social interaction, and purpose for living. He proposed that the main components of future studies should be designed around the inclusion of regular people and their beliefs about the future. Utilizing a collaborative foresight approach increases the requisite variety in scenario creation and improves the quality of ideation, problem definition, and strategic options for long-term planning (Weigand, Flanagan, Dye, & Jones, 2014). For governments, not only does the inclusion of "regular people" increase the legitimacy of the output of the foresight process, but it may also offer more desirable ways of redistributing power amongst stakeholders.

In their description of "inclusive foresight," Loveridge and Saritas (2008) describe a heuristic process motivated by inclusivity, where all perspectives are included regardless of expertise, and where power is shared amongst participants. More often than not, participatory foresight approaches are aimed at creating aspirational or preferred futures and begin with the belief that anyone who has a stake and role in realizing a particular future is entitled to a say as to how that future may look (UNDP Global Centre for Public Service Excellence, n.d.). In a participatory action learning approach to foresight, participants develop a sense of ownership over the future by creating scenarios based on

assumptions and what matters most to them (Inayatullah, 2013).

Miemis, Smark, and Brigis (2012) coined the term "Open Foresight," which is a model of collaborative web-based foresight initiatives, likened to crowdsourcing, that aims to harness collective intelligence in futures studies. More broadly, Nikolova (2013) describes participatory foresight as "[a process] aiming at wider inclusion of experts, citizens, stakeholders or non-governmental activists, in the process of anticipating and planning the future." This definition is broad enough to encompass most foresight processes that have emerged in response to widening stakeholder participation in futures studies. For the purpose of this discussion, foresight processes deliberately designed to include non-traditional stakeholders will be referred to as participatory.

Participatory Foresight in Government

Participatory foresight approaches typically require significant effort to design a collaborative process that is effective at engaging diverse stakeholders. For participants, the process can often involve multiple workshops and require a considerable, and potentially prohibitive, time investment. While there are many existing creative approaches to participatory foresight, Hanssen, Johnstad, & Klausen (2009, p. 1747) state that "there is a need to develop new and innovative approaches for securing democratic information exchange in foresight processes."

Generally, despite consensus around the advantages of multi-stakeholder engagement and public discourse for scientific research, engaging the public in any scientific processes continues to be a challenge (Perna, 2017) and foresight is no exception. Often, foresight processes do not ensure equal participation, with tenuous accountability and levels of transparency for those who are included (Hanssen, Johnstad, & Klausen, 2009). Similarly, governments have struggled to create public engagement processes that meet these same criteria. Well-designed participatory foresight processes have the potential "to

alleviate the widely discussed crisis of representative democracy and strengthen the contended legitimacy of established power mechanisms and structures” (Nikolova, 2013).

Participatory foresight approaches have the potential to improve public participation and build stronger relationships between residents and government (Jennsen, 2009; Nikolova, 2013). For governments, including residents who can challenge the biases of public servants and foresight practitioners, can be especially valuable. Co-creating visions of the future and subsequent strategies to arrive at the preferred future can lead to stronger, more resilient, and resident-focused policies (Hanssen, Johnstad, & Klausen, 2009). However, participatory foresight must be designed with authenticity and, for residents, that means feeling that their perspective is valued and included to create a genuine collective future vision (Oliveiro, 2018).

Why Use Scenarios?

Scenarios are a useful and powerful tool to challenge the expected view of the future and enable stakeholders to comprehend that the future cannot be predicted and is, in fact, plural. Through storytelling, scenarios can bring to life how key trends might be expressed and interact with one another, and the resulting implications from these interactions in future worlds. Ultimately, scenarios can be used as a testing ground for future-proofing policies, to help policymakers understand how the future might be impacted by policy changes introduced in the present day.

When contemplating which direction to pursue after the first phase of our research, there were several options open for exploration. We determined that a foresight exploration of the futures of public engagement would provide a unique and valuable contribution to the field of public engagement, and more specifically for public servants involved in city building in Toronto.

The following question was used to guide the final phase of research (see the Purpose section in the introduction for more information on the research question):

How might we provoke new thinking about the futures of meaningful public engagement in city building decisions for Toronto public servants?

To begin, we needed to determine whether it was appropriate to explore multiple futures or a preferred future. Despite the more typical view of participatory foresight as a preferred futures method, with our goal of provoking new thinking it seemed more valuable to provide highly contrasting scenarios with diverse possibilities.

We determined that it was appropriate to build explorative scenarios, which examine the historical context, the current situation and trends, and uncertainties impacting the topic at hand to create plausible, probable, and possible futures (see Figure 18 and Table 6 for more information about normative versus exploratory futures). Creating a set of scenarios would enable public servants to test potential policies across several futures, rather than only against the expected future, which is commonly done in more traditional strategic planning exercises. It would also give public servants a robust view of future possibilities and a jumping off point to work with residents to identify preferred elements across scenarios to inform a strategy for a shared preferred future.

“The future is uncertain, and analysis of just one scenario does little to communicate much about the range of opportunities and challenges liable to confront us.”

United Nations Industrial Development Organization, 2004

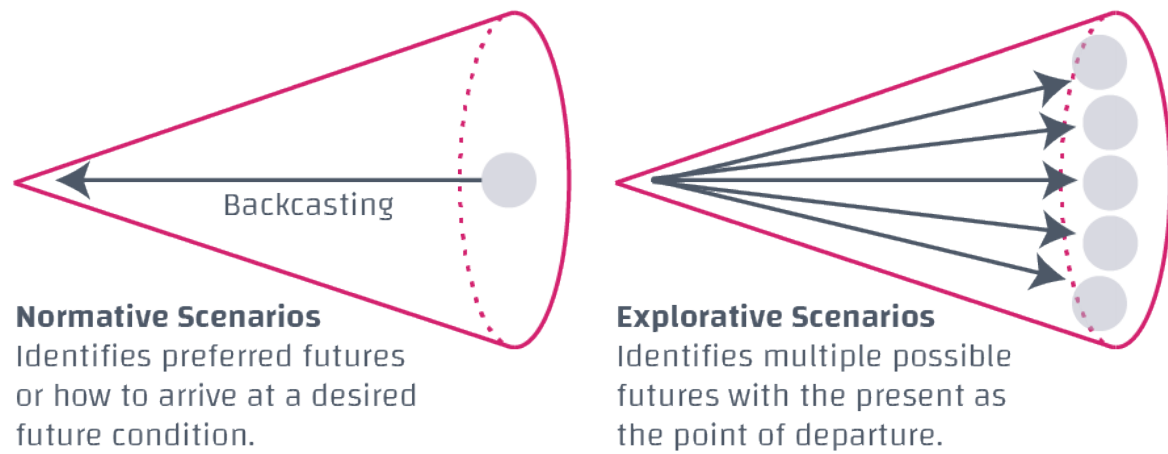


Fig 18:
Visual representation of Normative versus Explorative Futures

	Normative	Explorative
Procedure	Identifies desirable futures of investigates how to arrive at future conditions	Explores possible future developments with the present as a point of departure
Function	Target-building function and/ore strategy development function	Explorative and/or knowledge function
Implementation	Definition and concretization of goals/or, if appropriate, identification of possible ways to reach a goal	Study of factors and unpredictabilities, test of possible actions to be taken and/or decision-making processes
Central question	How? · How is it to come about? · How do we get there?	What? · What if?
Inclusion of probabilities	Indirect, part of plausible shaping and planning	Possible

Table 6:
Schematic comparison of explorative and normative scenarios (Kosow, H., & Gaßner, R., 2008)

Typically, scenario building workshops are time and resource intensive, taking place over at least a day and involving dozens of participants (United Nations Industrial Development Organization, 2004, pp. 67-69). These workshops often require that participants come prepared with some level of knowledge about the subject that will be explored.

Our research, however, was heavily constrained by time and the limited availability of stakeholders to participate in workshops. To continue the overall participatory approach to this project, it was necessary to employ a scenario development method that would enable stakeholders to contribute in a meaningful way without demanding too much of their time. To apply the expert and user recommendations that we had uncovered in the first phase of our research (described in detail in Volume 1), the scenario method would need to:

- provide participants with enough background and context to be able to engage with potentially unfamiliar material,
- enable creative and generative thinking,
- facilitate positive interactions between participants,
- create opportunities for participants to have fun,
- and ultimately, empower participants — residents and public servants — to co-create the futures of public engagement.

To meet all of these criteria, the scenario development method would require co-creation within a participatory workshop that was expert-informed. To meet the time constraints impacting our research, we realized that we would need to combine existing foresight tools in creative ways.

	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.
PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision. We will seek your feedback on drafts and proposals.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work together with you to formulate solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

Fig 19:
International Association for Public Participation Spectrum of Participation

Modeling a Public Engagement Process

We set out to design a scenario development process with a high level of integrity, that would deliver value for our users (residents), and that adhered to as many of the expert recommendations that we had uncovered as possible. For the scenario development portion of this project, we continued to model a public engagement process.

The International Association of Public Participation’s (IAP2) Spectrum was designed to help organizations determine an appropriate level of participation for the public during an engagement process. The IAP2 spectrum demonstrates that “differing levels of participation are legitimate and depend on the goal, time frames, resources, and levels of concern in the decision to be made” (IAP2, 2006). For more information about the IAP2’s framework, see Volume 1 of this document.

Our public participation goal for our scenario development method was to “collaborate,” or co-create, with our stakeholder groups. One of the biggest and most persistent challenges in public engagements is how to use input from the process to create output that reflects participants contributions. Ensuring that the final solution, in this case the set of scenarios produced, were representative of participants ideas remained a major consideration for us throughout the scenario development process.

CHAPTER 2

The Development of Collective Scenarios

The scenario development process, which we refer to as collective scenarios, emerged from the desire to engage users in co-creating the futures of public engagement. Our goal was to create an engaging and enjoyable workshop that would allow participants the opportunity to be creative while generating ideas that would be used to build future worlds of public engagement in Toronto.

Given the existing constraints and design considerations — the limited amount of time to conduct the workshop (a three-hour event) and a strong desire to ensure that the process was collaborative and inclusive of our users — we needed a way to maximize the quality and quantity of ideas generated during the workshop. We planned to use the output of the workshop to build scenarios that would reflect the concepts and ideas generated by participants.

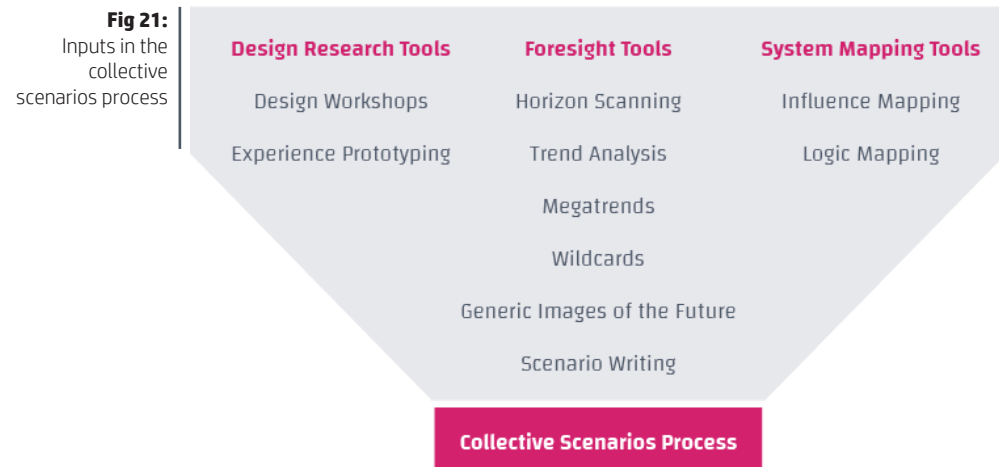
While exploring approaches for participatory and generative futures workshops, we were encouraged by our primary advisor, Helen Kerr, to consider developing a card game that incorporated our Horizon Scanning. Subsequently, in our research, we came across several foresight card games used to help players explore ideas about the future. The concept of using a card game fit well with our workshop design criteria (see Figure 20). The Horizon Scanning exercise that we had already begun — looking for signals and

Fig 20:
Workshop Design Criteria

Workshop Design Criteria
Participatory Participants will actively participate during the workshop in creating an output that could inform scenario writing.
Creative The workshop will enable participants to think imaginatively about potentially unfamiliar ideas and concepts and the future.
Informative The workshop will offer participants the opportunity to learn about our research and will provide some general information about the practice of foresight.
Generative The workshop will produce an output that will be useful to the research team to move forward with Scenario Development.
Enjoyable The workshop will be fun and engaging and enable participants to build relationships with one another.

trends related to public engagement and city building in Toronto — would work well as a starting point for a card game.

The development of the collective scenarios process was highly iterative and employed many design research, systems thinking, and foresight tools. The scenario development process was prototyped in workshops where participants were invited to try out a new variation on a collaborative foresight game. The final process for collective scenarios is described in detail later in this chapter.



There were five main stages in the development and deployment of the collective scenarios process:

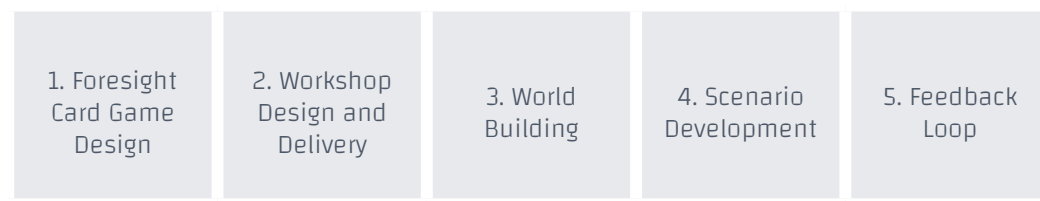


Fig 22: Collective scenarios development process

“Engaged foresight not only facilitates better plans but produces better and more engaged citizens.”

Institute for the Future

Gameplay in Futures Studies

There are many examples of gameplay used in foresight, including online games, board games, card games, and more experiential games such as role-play or simulation-based games. Dufva et al. (2016) state that “games can create fun and engaging experiences that increase the interaction between participants to the foresight process as well as with the data gathered.” Inlove & Gudiksen (2017), describe “game tools,” which are “games that are used as tools to generate ideas, facilitate specific processes or learning” and which are open-ended and generative.

More specifically, many existing foresight card games are designed to help participants comprehend and internalize new knowledge, communicate ideas about the future, and invite more diverse stakeholders into the foresight process (Dufva et al., 2016). Table 7 lists an excerpt of foresight card games that are currently available.

Table 7: Excerpt of foresight card games

Game	Created by	Description	Cost
Cities Alive	Arup Foresight	Stakeholders at all levels — citizens, planner, and officials — prioritize and explore issues shaping the future of their city. There are three variations that can be played with one deck of 100 cards.	Available for free download
The Thing from the Future	Situation Lab (Stuart Candy & Jeff Watson).	The object of the game is to come up with the most entertaining and thought-provoking descriptions of hypothetical objects from different near-, medium-, and long-term futures.	Available for free download
Impact	Idea Couture	Participants learn about the basics of futures thinking, the latest trends in technology and how they may impact the future.	Available for purchase Cost: \$65 CAD
ForesightNZ Playing Cards	ForesightNZ	Using a deck of 64 cards, players develop and strengthen their futures thinking skills, including scenario-building, problem solving, creative thinking and dealing with uncertainty. There are three variations included.	Available for free download

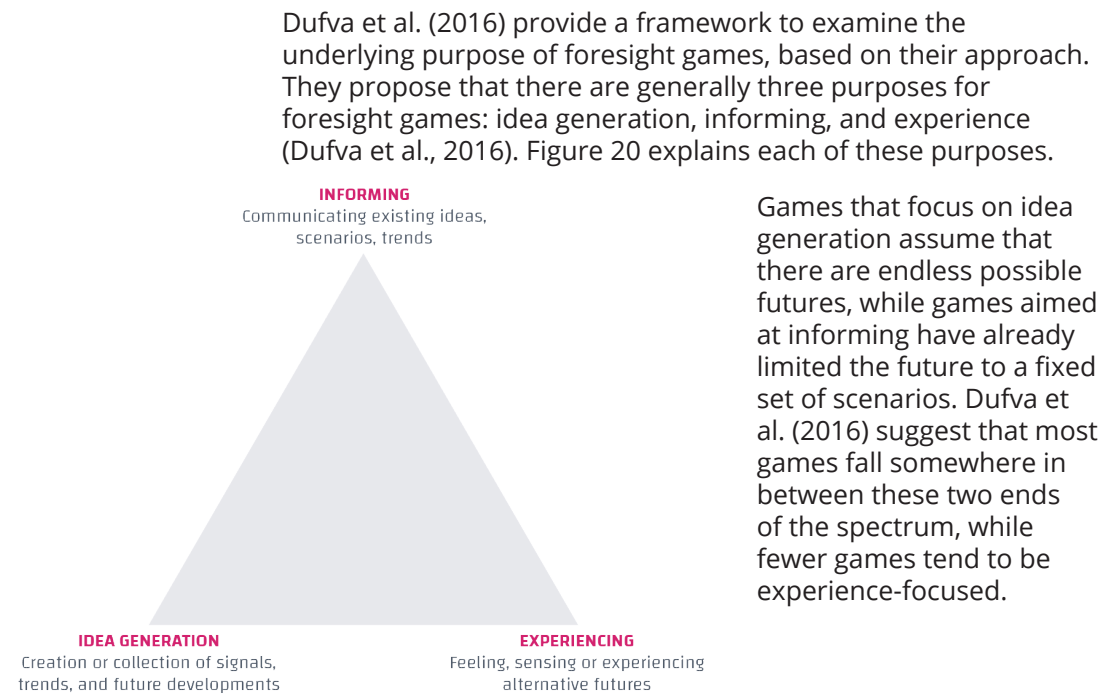


Fig 23:
Purposes of Games in Foresight
(adapted from Dufva et al., 2016)

1. Foresight Card Game Design

The development of the foresight card game, called In the Event, was an iterative process designed alongside planning the workshop in which it would be played. Keeping in mind the goal was to have workshop participants generate output to contribute to scenario writing, we set about developing the premise for the game. Familiar structures, including rules and procedures, in gameplay, forces participants to actively engage in the activity and creates a safe place for experimenting with creative ideas (Inlove & Gudiksen, 2017). Developing a game would allow us to create parameters for participation while encouraging creative and critical thinking.

An existing Horizon Scan, which was the basis for a subsequent Trend Analysis, became the foundation of the game design process. Drawing inspiration from the ForesightNZ Playing Cards (New Zealand Treasury, & McGuinness Institute, 2016), we determined that by combining a set of Trend cards with a deck of Event cards detailing Wildcard Events, a player could remark on the implications of a Trend colliding with an Event. The ForesightNZ Playing Cards provided us a starting point from which we were able to develop and adapt a card deck and rules for gameplay.

Stage 1 — Analyzing Trends

The Horizon Scanning for trends related to public engagement and city building, that we had already begun, laid the groundwork for this stage. The trend analysis consisted of:

- scanning for signals of change and grouping signals into broader trends, and
- grouping trends into categories using the STEEP-V framework to ensure that we had a comprehensive representation.

Stage 2 — Brainstorming Wildcard Events

Wildcard Events were developed by:

- brainstorming a set of wildcard events, that either take place in Toronto, or, that would have a significant impact on Toronto, and
- narrowing the list of events to a total of 40 and categorizing them according to level of impact and general awareness of the event (the spread of events in each category appears in Figure 24).

Stage 3 — Designing the game

Designing the gameplay was iterative and, ultimately, ended on a version that was fast-paced, generative, creative, and simple. The name of the game, In the Event, comes from how the game is played (i.e. In the Event that “x” happens then “y” may happen). The game includes the following components:

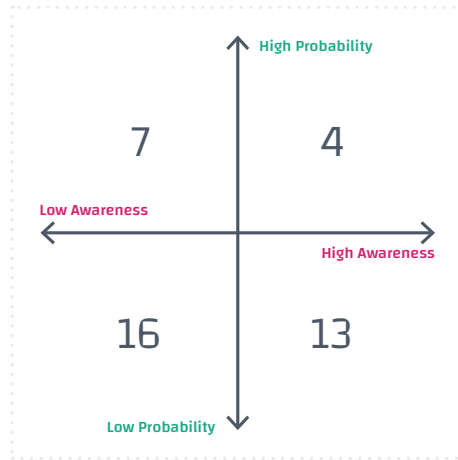


Fig 24:
Spread of
Wildcard Events

- introducing Megatrends, that had been generalized about Toronto, at the beginning of the game to help position players 15 years in the future, and
- asking each player, in each round, to give a short description of what happens when an event and trend interact.

These short player-generated narratives, called micro-scenarios, would be used to develop scenarios of the futures of public engagement.

Stage 4 — Refining the card deck and gameplay

There were several rounds of revisions made to the card deck and gameplay, including:

- creating a low-fidelity prototype that led to revisions to the rules and card design,
- holding a prototyping workshop with students enrolled in the Master of Design, Strategic Foresight and Innovation program at OCAD University, to test the workshop and card game, and to collect data in the form of micro-scenarios,
- soliciting feedback from workshop participants about missing trends, and
- validating participant-generated trends and adding them to the final In the Event deck.

The complete In the Event card deck can be found in the Supplementary Materials section.

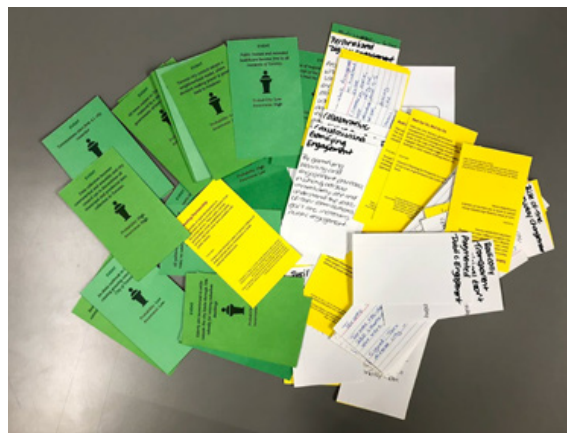


Fig 25:
Original Prototype
of 'In the Event'



IN THE EVENT GAMEPLAY

Gameplay Overview

A competitive and creative game

The object of the game is to come up with imaginative visions of the future in fifteen years. Each round, players will take turns being the Event Master. Event Masters are responsible for choosing a winner each round and giving a short rationale for their choice — they may use any criteria they wish for selecting the winner. The remaining players will take turns, each playing a Trend Card from their hand and creating a micro-scenario — a short and insightful, interesting, or provocative description about how the Trend and Event cards interact with one another. The winner of each round keeps the Event card put into play for that round, and whoever has the most Event cards when the game ends is declared the overall winner.

Materials

A full In the Event deck and game notes.

Number of Players

In the Event is best suited for a group of four to five players.

The Cards

The In the Event deck contains three types of playing cards: Event, Trend, and Joker cards. Trend and Event cards are numbered for easy recording on the game notes worksheet. These notes help contextualize micro-scenarios following the game.

Event Cards

Event cards describe Wildcard Events that, either occur in Toronto, or are likely to have an impact on Toronto. Each Event card has a coloured dot to indicate to the player how likely the event is and how aware society is about the event.

- Green events – high awareness and high probability (e.g. The City of Toronto launches city-wide free Wifi).
- Pink events – low awareness and high probability (e.g. Toronto implements a tax for cars entering the city)
- Light grey events – low awareness and low probability (e.g. Torontonians elect their first A.I. city councillor).
- Dark grey events – high awareness and low probability (e.g. Toronto secedes from Ontario).

Trend Cards

Trend cards show changes that are taking place over time. Players can choose to interpret whether the trend will grow, decline, or remain the same in fifteen years. Each Trend Card shows the title of the trend, a short description, and gives an example to illustrate how the Trend appears today.

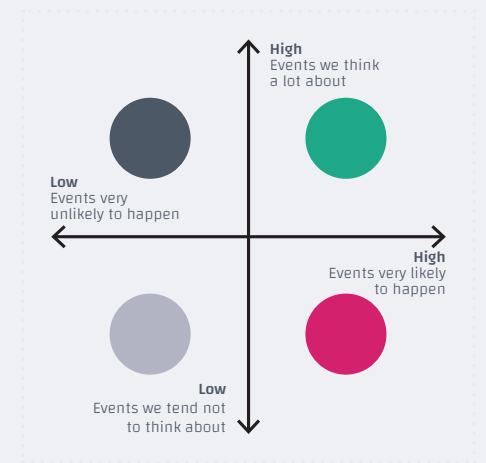


Fig 26:
Wildcard Event
Categories

Joker Cards

Joker cards are blank and may be used by players to come up with their own Trends or Events — it is the players' choice as to how they play the card.

Playing the Game



Fig 27:
'In the Event'
Trend Cards

Set up

Determine who has the longest surname, this player will deal first. Shuffle the Trend Cards, deal out three to each player, and place the remaining cards in the middle of the table along with the pile of Event Cards. Each player is given a copy of the game notes worksheet (see Supplementary Materials) to record notes about their micro-scenarios. There are boxes on the worksheet to record the Trend and Event numbers which are on each card. Before the first Event Card is played, the dealer should determine how long players will have to generate ideas for the round (usually 1-2 minutes). If this is the first round of play, players may need additional time to review their Trend Cards.

The Round

The round begins with the dealer flipping over the top Event Card and reading it out loud to the group. Starting with the player to the dealer's left each player must choose the Trend Card from their hand that they think is most relevant to the Event Card flipped by the dealer. Players should record notes in the game notes provided.

Each players' turn begins with reading their Trend Card of choice out loud to the group and in 30 seconds describe their micro-scenario — a brief vision of the future where the Trend and Event card interact. Replace each card played with a fresh card drawn from the deck to maintain a hand of three Trend Cards. The dealer will select a winning Trend Card and give their rationale.

Start the next round by rotating the dealer role to the left.

Facilitation Notes

To ensure that we kept accurate documentation of each micro-scenario generated, we had a volunteer positioned at each table who electronically documented detailed descriptions, and we audio recorded the workshops.

Variation on Scoring

Instead of having the dealer choose the winner, have players vote on which micro-scenario they find the most interesting, entertaining, provocative, or plausible.



2. Foresight Workshop Design and Delivery

The workshop began with an overview of the research and findings uncovered to date by our team. Workshop objectives were reviewed, as well as how the output from the workshop would be used in future work.

The majority of the workshop was taken up by playing the game. Participants were split into two groups of four for gameplay, and each table had a recorder and a member of our research team to facilitate. The groups were built intentionally to ensure an equal mix of residents, public servants, and public engagement practitioners at each table. In two workshops, players completed 21 rounds of play and generated a total of 77 micro-scenarios.

Participants were recruited for the workshop from our user and expert interview groups from the first phase of our research as well as through professional networks. Participants signed up for the workshop through the online ticketing site, Eventbrite (see Figure 28 for the workshop event page).

At the end of the workshop, participants completed an evaluation of both the workshop and the card game. This feedback is discussed in further detail below.

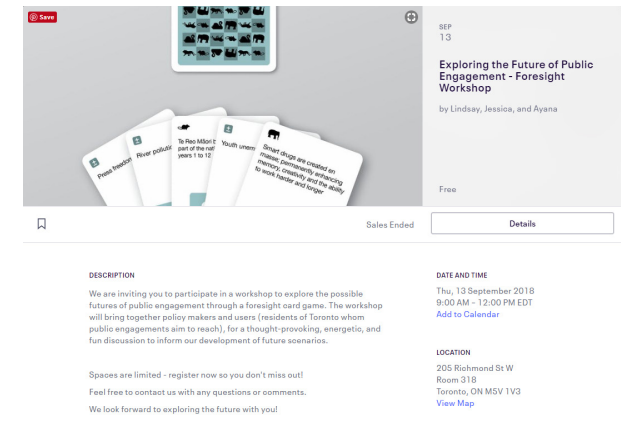


Fig 28:
Foresight Workshop
Event Invitation



Fig 29-31:
Workshop
participants playing
In the Event

3. World Building

With the goal to provoke new thinking about the possible futures of public engagement, we wanted to create a set of scenarios that depicted very distinct possibilities for public engagement. We determined that to create mutually exclusive future worlds we needed to use a deductive approach to scenario building (a brief comparison of deductive versus inductive approaches can be found in Figure 32, adapted from Farrington, Crews, & Green, 2013). We chose Dator's Generic Images to create the parameters of our future worlds.

Inductive versus Deductive Scenario Building

Inductive method (or bottom-up)
The approach builds step-by-step on the data available and allows the structure of the scenarios to emerge by itself. The overall framework is not imposed; the storylines grow out of the step-by-step combining of the data.

Deductive method (or top-down)
The analyst attempts to infer an overall framework to start with, after which pieces of data are fitted into the framework wherever they fit most naturally (this is the approach described in the step-by-step guide on this page).

Fig 32:
Inductive vs
Deductive Scenarios

Before we began to examine how public engagement would look in each generic future, we needed to understand the drivers that were most critical and most uncertain for public engagement. We analyzed the underlying drivers of the trends we had developed for our foresight card game. Once we determined all the driving forces behind our trends, we mapped these drivers

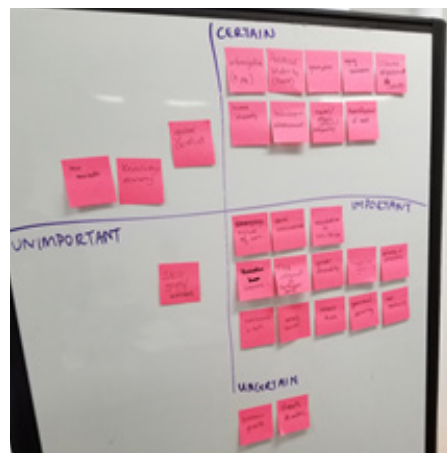


Fig 33:
Mapping Public
Engagement Drivers

Dator provides a framework of four future archetypes and offers insight as to how major drivers of our society are expressed in these future worlds. None of these future worlds are considered "good" or "bad," and none should be thought of as the "most likely scenario." Dator (2009), suggests that "in the long run, all four generic forms have equal probabilities of happening, and need to be considered in equal measure and sincerity."

in a 2x2 matrix to determine which were certain versus uncertain and important versus unimportant. When we examined the level of importance for the driver, this was determined by how much of an effect the driver would have on public engagement.

Once we determined which drivers were most uncertain and



Fig 34-37:
Influence Mapping
within Dator's
Generic Images of
the Future

most important, we determined how they are expressed in each of Dator's Generic Images. Finally, we validated the logic of our future worlds with influence mapping.

4. Scenario Development

With the parameters set out for each future world, we were able to sort the micro-scenarios from our workshop according to which world they were best suited. Each member of our team sorted all 77 micro-scenarios and then, as a group, we reconciled and came to consensus as to which future the micro-scenario was best suited. The micro-scenarios were used to develop a general vision of the future worlds, create a timeline of events, and to add narrative pieces during scenario writing. While each idea is not necessarily reflected, the final scenarios are reflective of the concepts and values that were expressed in the micro-scenarios.

5. Feedback Loop

Lastly, our draft scenarios were sent to the workshop participants for their feedback. The set of written scenarios were sent to attendees via email with an invitation to share their thoughts.

Limitations and Challenges of Designing the Process

The collective scenarios process was designed with and around certain limitations. They include the following:

Co-Design

Due to time constraints in this research, we were not able to use an entirely co-creative process. The development of In the Event, including the Horizon Scanning exercise that served as the foundation of the game, could have benefitted from user input earlier in the process. To mitigate this limitation, we used our first workshop as a prototyping opportunity and made several adjustments to the card deck and gameplay afterwards.

Accuracy and Simplicity

We wanted the card game to be evidence-based without overwhelming players with information. It was a challenge to determine how much information to put on Trend Cards, to ensure participants were able to use the information to generate a micro-scenario, without being leading.

Event Spread

Events were not evenly spread

across the four categories of probability and awareness. Due to time constraints, we proceeded with the original Event Card deck. In the end, this did not prove to be a limiting factor during gameplay.

Sample Size and Mix

The participants for the workshop were primarily chosen from the interview sample from Phase 1 of this research and our professional networks. As a result, many of the participants were individuals who were open-minded to foresight and invested in public engagement. This project could have benefited from broader outreach and a more diverse sample of participants.

Micro-Scenario Quality

While the majority of the ideas generated during the gameplay were very creative and demonstrated a level of critical inquiry about the trend and event on the player's behalf,

there were a sample of micro-scenarios (0.08%) that were not usable, either because they lacked substance, were entirely outrageous, or in one case nearly identical to another micro-scenario.

Feedback Loops

Although we set out to model expert identified practices from public engagement, we did not initially build in a feedback loop for our participants to provide input on our draft scenarios. In the end, we were able to send the draft scenarios for participants to review, but with a short window of time within which feedback could be incorporated. Unfortunately,

we did not hear back from any participants at this stage.

Feedback Modality

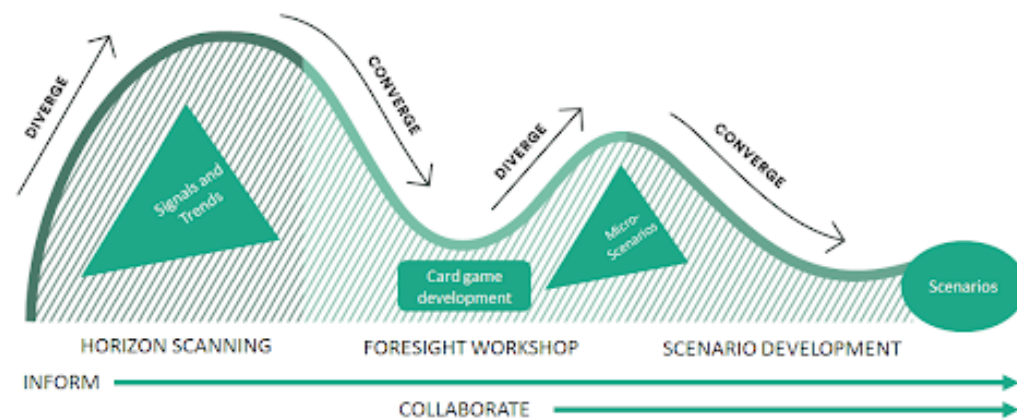
The draft scenarios were quite dense and would have required a significant time commitment for participants to read, review, and provide feedback to our team. Sending a lengthy document via email and asking very generally for feedback did not work well and we did not receive any feedback from our workshop participants. Asking participants for specific feedback, or providing scenarios in a different modality (e.g. audio recording) may have proved more useful.

CHAPTER 3

How to Use the Collective Scenario Process

Fig 38:
Collective
Scenarios Process

Collective scenarios should begin with a general area of exploration (i.e. the futures of “X”) but does not require a specific focal question. Collective scenarios is an explorative scenario development process that employs deductive world building with Jim Dator’s Generic Images of the Futures as a framework to create a set of distinct scenarios.



Public participation goal	We will create a robust trend deck to inform you of the current state.	We will look to you for input and let your ideas guide the development of scenarios.	We will work with you to ensure that your ideas and concepts are represented in the scenarios.
Promise to participants	To provide a comprehensive and balanced picture of trends impacting city-building and public engagement	To partner with participants to develop possible futures.	To work with participants to ensure that their idea are well understood and represented.

The process requires participants to make use of divergent and convergent thinking and, wherever possible, should include a broad range of stakeholders throughout the process as co-creators. The model, which has been adapted from Ideo’s Design Thinking framework (Ideo, n.d.) and IAP2’s Public Participation Spectrum, demonstrates the collective scenarios process and how principles of public participation were threaded throughout.

There are seven general steps in the collective scenarios development process:

1. Develop the In the Event Card Deck

When possible the card deck should be co-created with stakeholders, including residents.

A. Conduct a horizon scan in your area of exploration.

Collect signals of change and begin to look for patterns to sort them into trends. Using the STEEP-V and/or VERGE framework, begin to categorize trends to ensure they represent a full spectrum of factors. Choose the most important trends for your topic and create a deck of at least 40 Trend Cards.

B. List Wildcard Events with levels of awareness and impact.

Conduct a brainstorming session to develop ideas for Wildcard events. If possible, hold this session with stakeholders and create a list of at least 30 events. Once you have developed your list, map the events in the matrix below. Try to ensure that each quadrant is represented.

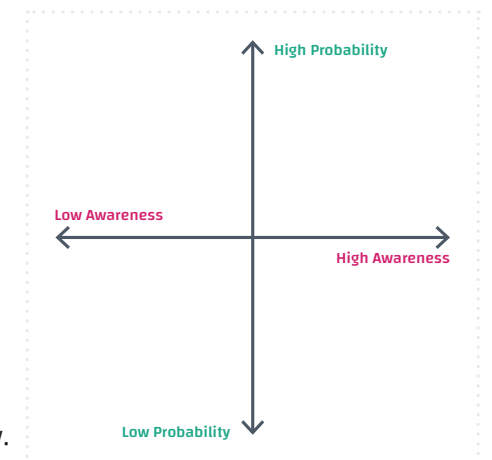


Fig 39:
Wildcard Event
Mapping

2. Plan the Gameplay Workshop

Invite participants to a workshop to play In the Event. Set the general context of the time horizon for players using Megatrends. Groups should be no more than four to five players, and each table should have a recorder to take notes and a facilitator to keep the game moving. Micro-scenarios generated by each player in each round of play should be recorded.

3. Driver Mapping

Determine the forces driving the trends in your Trend Deck. Map these drivers on a matrix for the level of certainty and level of importance. Determine how the most uncertain and most important drivers for your area of exploration would be expressed in each of Dator's Generic Images. Use the driver table that Dator provides if any of your drivers overlap with those that he has predetermined. With this list of drivers, the future worlds of Growth, Collapse, Discipline, and Transform should begin to materialize.

4. Test the Logic of your Worlds

Using influence mapping, determine if how you have expressed your drivers holds true; this is an opportunity to correct your logic and develop a deep understanding of what each of these worlds looks like.

5. Map the Micro-Scenarios

Review the micro-scenarios generated in the gameplay workshop. Map them to the world to which they are most suited. The group may decide at this point to discard some micro-scenarios due to similarities, a lack of future detail, or incomplete ideas.

6. Write your Scenarios

Use the micro-scenarios to create a timeline of events and to add narrative pieces to the future scenarios. Individual micro-scenarios may not be identifiable in the final scenario, but they should be representative of the ideas and concepts discussed during the gameplay workshop.

7. Send your Scenarios to Workshop Participants for Feedback

Ensure that participants have enough time to review the scenarios and provide feedback. Include specific questions or aspects of the scenarios that you want participants to comment on.

Limitations and Challenges of the Process

Collective scenarios is an emergent process that is not without limitations. Before considering using this approach to scenario development, please consider the following:

Futures Thinking

Participants may experience difficulty situating themselves into the future. Some of the micro-scenarios may be more reflective of the trends and events playing out in today's world. Using Megatrends to help set the future stage may help.

Volume of Micro-Scenarios

In the Event is a fast-paced game and players will likely get through several rounds of play. Carefully consider the number of micro-scenarios that are manageable after the workshop. Although volunteers recorded micro-scenarios in our workshop, often we had to review the audio recording to confirm a storyline, which was very time-consuming. Each micro-scenario needs to be reviewed post-workshop to map them into the appropriate worlds, and a large volume will require more time.

Scenario Feedback

Providing thoughtful feedback can be quite time-consuming. Try to keep scenarios concise to enable participants to review without causing a significant burden. If possible, consider bringing participants back to review and revise scenarios together.

Inherent Bias

As with any scenario development process, authors need to be aware of writing their bias into the future. The goal is to create neutral scenarios, which do not make any value judgements about the future worlds. Despite this, there is likely always a certain kind of value judgement made. Including impacted users throughout the process can help to ensure that the stakeholder values are well represented in future scenarios.

CHAPTER 4

Measuring up to Public Engagement

We set out to design a collaborative scenario development process that would also model a public engagement process. Our goal was to develop a process with a high level of integrity in which participants felt heard and their input was valued. In the following section, we critique the collective scenarios process against criteria set out by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) and by ourselves in our first Volume of this research project.

IAP2 Core Values for the Practice of Public Participation

The International Association in Public Participation (IAP2) has developed the “IAP2 Core Values for Public Participation”, which are for use in the development and implementation of public participation processes (International Association for Public Participation, n.d.).

The table below lists the IAP2 Core Values and how our team measured up to fulfilling them:

Table 8:
IAP2 Values against
collective scenarios

Core Values for Public Participation	Value Expressed in our Process
1. Public participation is based on the belief that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process.	We included stakeholders who are impacted by public engagement to be a part of our scenario development process. This included residents, public servants, and public engagement practitioners.
2. Public participation includes the promise that the public's contribution will influence the decision.	At the outset of our process, we knew that the output from the foresight card game would influence how we wrote our set of scenarios. We shared with participants that their input would be used to inform scenario building.
3. Public participation promotes sustainable decisions by recognizing and communicating the needs and interests of all participants, including decision makers.	By including public servants in our discussions, we attempted to ensure that our scenarios would be representative of diverse views that decision-makers would be able to situate themselves within.
4. Public participation seeks out and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision.	While we did include a range of stakeholders, many vulnerable or marginalized groups were excluded from our process.
5. Public participation seeks input from participants in designing how they participate.	Given the time constraints in this project, we did not employ a co-design process throughout, meaning that participants did not have a role in designing how they wanted to be engaged on this project.
6. Public participation provides participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way.	Our workshop was designed to provide the information that participants needed to participate in the game, and the game was designed to be informative and easy to play. Feedback from participants in the workshop indicates that they were able to participate in a meaningful way.
7. Public participation communicates to participants how their input affected the decision.	After reviewing the workshop feedback and learning that some participants left feeling unsure of how their input would be used, our team added an extra touch point with participants to share our process for scenario development, as well as sharing draft versions of the scenarios.

User Values in Public Engagement

From our primary research, we uncovered five critical aspects that users, in this case, residents, value throughout public engagement processes (For more information on the characteristics of these values, see Supplemental Material). When developing our scenario process, we tried to ensure that we were mindful of these values:

Explicit Accountability

At the outset of the foresight workshop, we attempted to be transparent about the level of influence that participants would have in the outcome of the research. Participants were told that the output generated in the workshop would be used in the next phase of the foresight process, scenario writing.

Opportunities for Influence

Bringing residents in at the beginning of the scenario development process meant that the impact of their contributions would be influential in developing the scenarios.

Outcomes Focus

Residents were informed at the workshop as to when they would hear from the research

team next. The process to integrate the workshop output was not fully formed at the time of the workshop, so participants were loosely informed as to exactly how their input would be used.

Distance from Decision-Making

Resident input was used to inform the direction of our scenario writing, but it was not entirely directive. The micro-scenarios generated in the workshop influenced the conceptual vision of each future world.

Participant Make-up

We recruited for our workshop using purposive sampling to ensure that we would have equal representation from our user groups, Toronto residents, public servants, and public engagement practitioners.

Expert Recommendations

The following chart outlines the expert recommendations uncovered in Volume 1 of this research project (please refer to Volume 1, Chapter 2 for more detail about each category of expert recommendation). The chart indicates if the recommendation was achieved and if so, by what means.

LEGEND	
Achieved	✓
Not Achieved	✗
Neutral	—
Future practice	→

Table 9:
Expert recommendations against collective scenarios

Recommendation	Achieved	Description
The Organizational Culture of Engagement		
Prioritize Unrelenting Transparency	—	Given that this was an emergent process, we thought we were as transparent as possible with our participants; however we could have provided our participants with more information throughout the process.
Stated Purpose	✓	At the beginning of the workshop, we reviewed the agenda and objectives for the session and informed participant about how the output from the workshop would be used.
The Purpose		
Clear Intentions	✓	We knew that we wanted participants to inform our future scenarios, although we were not entirely clear at the outset of our scenario development process exactly how that would occur. We were open and interested to hear different perspectives on the possible futures of public engagement.
Selective Engagement	✓	When we decided to explore the possible futures of public engagement, we knew that this would require input beyond our research team.
Effective Facilitation	✓	Before the workshop, we created a detailed facilitation guide for the workshop and reviewed the materials that each team member would be responsible for presenting or facilitating. Throughout the workshop, we were mindful of helping participants share the space thoughtfully with one another.
Meaningful Value	✓	We endeavoured to provide value to our workshop participants by introducing new concepts about futures thinking and facilitating relationship building with other participants in the workshop.
Focus on Lived Experience	—	While we did not focus explicitly on lived experience of public engagement in the workshop, participants were free to draw on their lived experience when generating their micro-scenarios.
The Audience		
Inclusive Outreach	✗	Our outreach was very limited, and the goal of the workshop was not explicitly evident in our outreach material.
Thoughtful Preparation	✓	There was no preparation material provided to participants in advance of the workshop. We did put effort into ensuring that the workshop and game were designed in a way that would allow participants to engage without preparation.
Rigorous Recruitment	✗	Our recruitment was limited to our professional networks and did not reach marginalized communities. As a result, the scenarios we have created may not be representative of many communities vision for the future.

Recommendation	Achieved	Description
The Design		
Collaborative Process Design	✘	We did not engage our users to understand how they wanted to engage about the futures of public engagement.
Considerate Timing	✘	The workshop took place on a weekday morning, which could have excluded some potential workshop participant from attending. Due to time constraints and availability of our team members, we were not able to hold more than two sessions of the workshop.
Carefully Selected Location	—	The workshop was held at OCAD University's Graduate Studies building, which is in downtown Toronto. For some participants, this meant travelling quite far to attend the workshop, but for most this was a central location. Holding the workshop at a university could have precluded some people from participating since universities have historically marginalized certain groups of people.
Mindful of Safety	✓	To create a safe space, at the beginning of the workshop, we proposed a set of ground rules for participants to adhere to during the workshop. Participants were invited to add to or modify any of the ground rules proposed.
Deliberate Design	✓	The workshop was designed with a specific goal in mind.
Fun Moments	✓	In the Event was designed to be fun and engaging. The majority of the workshop time was used playing the game.
Necessary Flexibility	✓	We checked in with participants throughout the workshop to allow them to set the pace and modify the agenda as needed.
The Follow-Up		
Efficient Feedback	✓	At the end of the workshop we informed participants that they would next hear from our research team when the research is published in the new year. We heard in our evaluations that participants were unclear on how their input would be used and in order provide clarity, we created an additional touchpoint with participants to share our process, draft scenarios, and solicit feedback.
Rationalized Decisions	→	Once this report is approved and made public, it will be shared with participants.
Demonstrate Impact	→	When the final report is shared with participants, we will highlight how their input shaped the scenarios.

Team Reflection

Although our team was well aware of what needs to be in place to ensure that a public engagement process is meaningful for participants, there were still areas where our process fell short. Most notably, and an area that many public engagements struggle with, was providing participants with enough information on how their input was to be used. Partially, this was due to the emergent nature of collective scenarios, but we also underestimated how explicit we should have been with informing participants about our process.

Overall, we focused more on designing our card game and workshop than on designing a process where participants were co-creating and engaged throughout. There are many reasons why this continuous engagement is challenging; they are well documented in Volume 1. Like so many teams who are delivering public engagement processes, our team was constrained by resources and by time. The process for collective scenarios that is outlined above stressed that all stakeholders should be engaged throughout the process. This reflects our learning, as we were not able to include participants throughout, but we understand and believe that continuous participation, from pre-planning to post-event, would have contributed tremendous value during the process and towards the final product.

CHAPTER 5

Research Contribution

Contribution to Strategic Foresight

Collective scenarios draws heavily on existing foresight methods, including Horizon Scanning, Trend Analysis, Driving Forces, and Dator's Generic Images. Where collective scenarios offers a unique approach for the field of Strategic Foresight, is with the development of the foresight card game *In the Event* and how the output of the game, the micro-scenarios, are used to fill in details for the scenario within an existing deductive framework.

In the Event offers a template that can easily be repurposed for other areas of exploration. Although brief, the micro-scenarios were rich in detail and provided us with an understanding of users values and beliefs about trends. While our team used Dator's Generic Images, it would be possible to map micro-scenarios to any other deductive scenario framework.

Gameplay in Foresight

Gamifying proved to be a very effective mechanism to engage users in a fun and generative workshop. If we were to position collective scenarios on Dufva et al.'s (2016) Purposes of Games in Foresight model, the method would fall between Informing and Idea Generation. Participants were informed with an existing set of trends for their consideration during the game, while also encouraged to generate their own ideas of how those trends might be expressed in the future. While *In the Event* does not have an explicit element of Experiencing built in to the process, participants in the workshop did express that some micro-scenarios did elicit an emotional response.

Contribution to Design Research

The collective scenarios process began with the desire to create an opportunity for participants to come together to generate ideas about the future of public engagement. The goal was to co-create scenarios that were reflective of participants' ideas, values, and beliefs. Ultimately, we were looking to conduct a generative design research workshop that would feed into our foresight process. Generative design research can give people the language to "imagine and express their ideas and dreams for future experiences" (Sanders & Stappers, 2013, p. 5).

Design Research Map

To understand how collective scenarios is situated in the realm of design research, we can examine where the method would be on the Map of Design Research, created by Liz Sanders (2006), which plots research approaches and methods onto two intersecting dimension. One dimension is defined by the overall approach to research, design-led versus expert-led. Historically, the research-led perspectives has been the dominant approach to research, while the design-led approach has more recently begun to gain popularity. The second dimension represents two opposing mindsets which are evident in design research today. This dimension is defined by the mindset that researchers approach their work with, either an expert mindset or a participatory mindset. The left side of the map depicts expert-led research methods, where participants are often thought of as "subjects", while the right side of the map depicts an approach to research where participants are considered experts in their own right and are viewed as co-creators in the design process (Sanders & Stappers, 2013, p. 5).

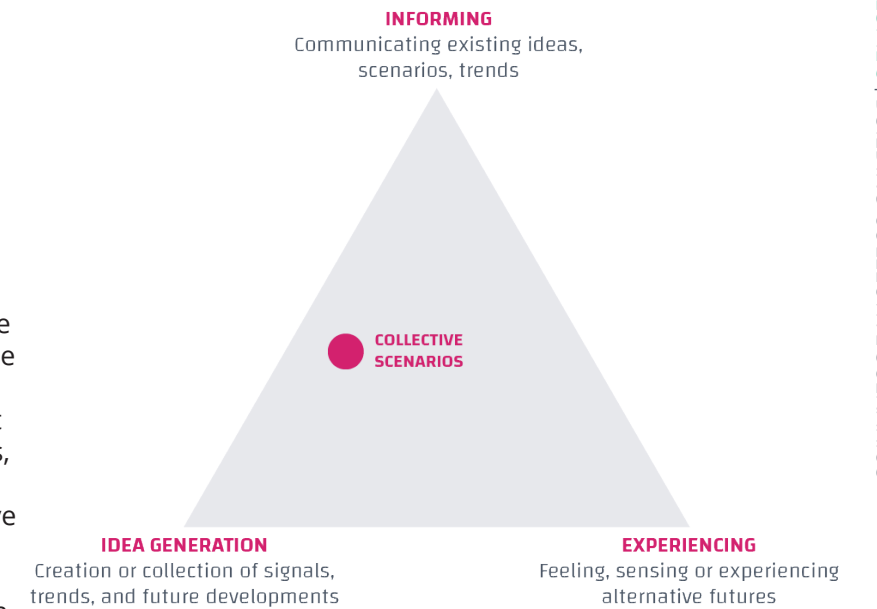


Fig 40: Collective scenarios placed on Dufva et al.'s (2016) Purposes of Games in Foresight Model.

Throughout the collective scenarios process, there were elements that fit into each of the four quadrants on the design research map:

Expert Mindset

Conducting a Horizon Scanning and Trend Analysis requires an ability to pattern-find, which, although can be learned, does require specialized skills and expertise which is characteristic of the Expert Mindset. This is not to say that there is not a role for participants in this stage of collective scenarios. Participants could be invited to contribute to signals and trends and the research team can guide them to find patterns.

Participatory Mindset

The entire premise of collective scenarios is to adopt a participatory approach to scenario development. Participants are considered co-creators of the scenarios, which they are able to do through playing the card game In the Event to generate micro-scenarios.

Design-Led

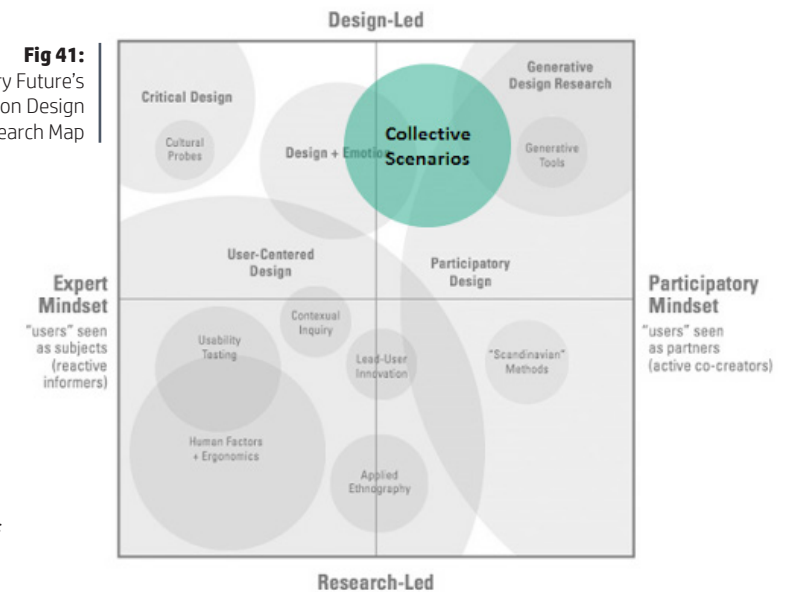
The evolution of collective scenarios was entirely design-led with the purpose to

engage impacted stakeholders throughout the scenario development process. The process was created to give participants as much control as possible over the creation of future scenarios. At the centre of collective scenarios is the foresight card game, In the Event, which was developed as a design research tool intended to empower participants to employ futures thinking and contribute to the development of scenarios.

Research-Led

In our development of the collaborative scenario process, we did employ a research-led approach to certain elements. We conducted extensive secondary research for our Horizon Scanning and for the development of the foresight card game. The primary research we conducted in the first phase of this project, expert and user interviews, as well as ethnography, also informed and shaped our process.

Fig 41:
Participatory Future's
Position on Design
Research Map



Positioning Collective Scenarios on the Design Research Map

Although there are some elements of an Expert Mindset that are required to complete collective scenarios, generally speaking the process leverages a Participatory Mindset, where participants in the process are seen as co-creators and the method itself is a Design-Led process. The collective scenarios process can be positioned on Sander's Design Research Map as a design-led method with a mainly Participatory mindset.

Contribution to Public Engagement

While not designed as a public engagement tool, In the Event, has potential applications for the field of public engagement. The game offers the opportunity for a diverse group of stakeholders to come together in an engaging and enjoyable way to consider the future. Here, we suggest applications for the game in public engagement.

Enable Futures Thinking in Local Government

In its current form, In the Event has the potential to help cities introduce the idea of foresight into their organizations. The game offers an entry point for city employees to learn about foresight and scenario development in a fun and engaging way.

Collaborative Strategic Planning

The output of the game provides insight into how stakeholders are thinking and

feeling about trends impacting the future. Colliding trends and events can illuminate unexpected outcomes and potential long-term impacts. Asking stakeholders to choose preferred micro-scenarios can help inform a preferred future which can then be used to guide strategic planning.

Build Empathy in the Community

Playing the game uncovers participants values and beliefs, which can be a really powerful tool for helping community

members build understanding. The game provides a safe place for participants to express their beliefs and values and to gain an understanding of views that differ from their own. Starting from a place of understanding can help build relationships and a common vision for the community.

Policy Testing

Early policy considerations could be built into the game in the form of event cards and be stress tested against key trends to understand how they may interact.

Collaborative Scenario Building

By employing the collective scenarios process, city officials have the ability to engage residents in creating possible futures for their city. Scenarios are a powerful tool to use to further engage the broader public and gather feedback about elements from each scenario that are preferred. With a robust feedback process, the data about preferred elements can be used to create a preferred future vision for the city. Using this vision, public officials can begin to work backwards to determine how to arrive at this preferred future.

CHAPTER 6

Future Exploration

The mixture and sequencing of foresight tools employed in this project, which we have referred to as collective scenarios, proved to be an effective process to engage stakeholders in scenario development, particularly when the availability of participants is limited or time is a constraint. The process can be used in its current form, without modification, to enable conversations throughout the city of Toronto about public engagement and their possible futures. Applying this process, and more specifically the foresight card game, In the Event, to other areas of exploration would require some effort to modify the Trend and Event cards. Based on feedback from workshop participants, In the Event, could be repurposed to explore the futures of a wide range of subjects.

Collective scenarios offers an effective, creative, and enjoyable approach to scenario development. While this document suggests that Dator's Generic Images be used for developing distinct scenarios, we believe that the collective scenarios process would work well with any deductive scenario method. Alternatively, if ending up with distinct scenarios is not as much of a concern, we contemplate that colliding micro-scenarios with one another might be used in an inductive scenario approach. The most important element throughout the collective scenarios process is to maintain the inclusion of stakeholders in co-creating scenarios to ensure that inclusive futures are developed.

We invite you to use the collaborative scenario process, including modifying our foresight card game, In the Event, to continue to iterate and improve upon the process. We look forward to hearing your feedback and continuing to evolve the collaborative scenarios process.

VOLUME 3

Supporting Resources

User Values in Public Engagement Processes

The following values were uncovered in our primary research in the first phase of this project.

Explicit accountability: Residents acknowledged the difficulty of conducting engagement processes with integrity. They value processes that are highly transparent about parameters of influence and potential outcomes. They stressed that public engagement should not be employed as a means of gaining favour with constituents or cultivating support for an initiative.

Opportunities for influence: Residents perceived great hindrances to the influence of public engagement processes on outcomes. Some residents value an opportunity to be involved earlier on in new initiatives to optimize the impact of engagement.

Outcomes focus: Residents often felt removed from the impact of engagement processes. Though residents believe public engagement processes are becoming more participatory and creative, there is a desire to be better informed about how findings will be used and the constraints of including feedback.

Distance from decision-making: Many residents acknowledged the limitations of having the public inform or even make government decisions. Instead, they propose influencing decision-making by informing principles or more conceptual elements surrounding new initiatives or projects.


Right participant make-up: Residents agreed that having the right participants is instrumental to creating meaning within public engagement. Many identified an intersectional lens as necessary for sourcing appropriate participants, those who might be most affected by an issue, or those most socially disenfranchised.





In the Event Game Notes

Scenario # <input type="checkbox"/> Event # <input type="checkbox"/> Trend # <input type="checkbox"/> Consider.... How does this trend intersect with the event card? Does the trend contribute to the event? Does the trend result from the event?	In the year 2033...
Scenario # <input type="checkbox"/> Event # <input type="checkbox"/> Trend # <input type="checkbox"/> Consider.... How does this trend intersect with the event card? Does the trend contribute to the event? Does the trend result from the event?	In the year 2033...
Scenario # <input type="checkbox"/> Event # <input type="checkbox"/> Trend # <input type="checkbox"/> Consider.... How does this trend intersect with the event card? Does the trend contribute to the event? Does the trend result from the event?	In the year 2033...

E1



Torontonians elect their first artificial intelligence city councillor.

Probability:  Awareness: 

E2



Toronto launches city-wide free Wi-Fi.

Probability:  Awareness: 


E3



Toronto secedes from Ontario.

Probability:  Awareness: 


E4





Toronto bans cars from the downtown core.

Probability:  Awareness: 

E5



Toronto mandates all Torontonians to cycle or walk to work a minimum of 50 days a year.

Probability:  Awareness: 

E6



Canada closes trade border with the USA.

Probability:  Awareness: 

E7



Bombardier recalls all Toronto Rocket subway cars due to a manufacturing error.

Probability:  Awareness: 

E8



A major earthquake destroys all bridges over the Don Valley.

Probability:  Awareness: 



In the Event Game Notes

Scenario # **In the year 2033...**

Event # **Trend #**

Consider....
 How does this trend intersect with the event card?
 Does the trend contribute to the event?
 Does the trend result from the event?

Scenario # **In the year 2033...**

Event # **Trend #**


Consider....
 How does this trend intersect with the event card?
 Does the trend contribute to the event?
 Does the trend result from the event?

Scenario # **In the year 2033...**

Event # **Trend #**

Consider....
 How does this trend intersect with the event card?
 Does the trend contribute to the event?
 Does the trend result from the event?


An ebola outbreak in Ottawa is causing growing concern in the city of Toronto.



Probability: ▶▶
Awareness: ▶▶

E17


A permit is now required to relocate to Toronto. Only 1000 permits per year are awarded.



Probability: ▶▶
Awareness: ▶▶

E18


Massive flooding has permanently closed Toronto's islands.



Probability: ▶▶
Awareness: ▶▶

E19


Toronto accepts a huge influx of climate refugees from the Caribbean due to extreme hurricane conditions.



Probability: ▶▶
Awareness: ▶▶

E20

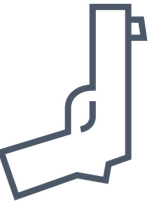
Canada legalizes all drugs.



Probability: ▶▶
Awareness: ▶▶

E21


Toronto puts a total ban on guns.



Probability: ▶▶
Awareness: ▶▶

E22

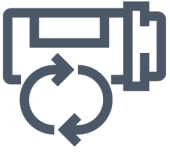
The Toronto - Ottawa - Montreal hyperloop opens. The trip takes a total of 39 minutes.



Probability: ▶▶
Awareness: ▶▶

E23

Researchers discover a way to extend the length and quality of human life by 50 years.



Probability: ▶▶
Awareness: ▶▶

E24



Two major Toronto universities close after employers no longer require post-secondary degrees.



Probability: ▶▶
Awareness: ▶▶

E9


Toronto's Raildeck park now allows picnickers to enjoy alcoholic beverages.



Probability: ▶▶
Awareness: ▶▶

E10

Toronto waterfront units are now 15% below market rent given foul smell from Lake Ontario.



Probability: ▶▶
Awareness: ▶▶

E11

A major fire destroys Beaches neighbourhood.




Probability: ▶▶
Awareness: ▶▶

E12




Toronto institutes a ten-year ban on new condo developments in the city.



Probability: ▶▶
Awareness: ▶▶

E13

The Toronto housing market crashes, causing a major recession.



Probability: ▶▶
Awareness: ▶▶

E14

Toronto implements a tax for cars entering the city limits.



Probability: ▶▶
Awareness: ▶▶

E15

Toronto city council has grown to 100 councillors.



Probability: ▶▶
Awareness: ▶▶

E16

Toronto reverses its 1998 amalgamation and the megacity disbands into its six component regions; each region elects its own mayor and city council.



Probability: ▶
Awareness: ▶

E33


The voting age is changed to 25, in line with psychological studies that demonstrate this is the age of brain maturity.



Probability: ▶
Awareness: ▶

E34


An age of majority for voting is a concept of the past and anyone who can understand the ballot, can vote.



Probability: ▶
Awareness: ▶

E35

All major airports in Toronto are shut down.



Probability: ▶
Awareness: ▶

E36


People can vote after living in Canada for 12 months, regardless of their residency status.



Probability: ▶
Awareness: ▶

E37

All elected positions in Canada become volunteer roles; no salary is issued for their political service.



Probability: ▶
Awareness: ▶

E38

Public transit and extended healthcare become free to all residents of Toronto.



Probability: ▶
Awareness: ▶

E39

The Province of Ontario assumes control of the City of Toronto.




Probability: ▶
Awareness: ▶

E40




Toronto city council adopts a neighbourhood model, where decision making power is given back to residents.



Probability: ▶
Awareness: ▶

E25

City of Toronto councillors vote to enact a 3-year maximum term for councillors.



Probability: ▶
Awareness: ▶

E26


The elderly are incentivized to settle outside the city limits through a 75% subsidy for renting suburban dwellings.



Probability: ▶
Awareness: ▶

E27


Toronto establishes a maximum one child policy.



Probability: ▶
Awareness: ▶

E28

Strain on internet grids leads to 2-week internet blackout across the GTA.



Probability: ▶
Awareness: ▶

E29

All news outlets in Toronto are replaced by a singular, government-driven news source.



Probability: ▶
Awareness: ▶

E30

In an attack on Toronto's economy, hackers wipe out telecommunication across Toronto.



Probability: ▶
Awareness: ▶

E31

City council opts to discontinue all municipal data collection in Toronto.



Probability: ▶
Awareness: ▶

E32

T9

Civic Disengagement

Due to increasing polarity in political discourse and a sense that individual contributions don't matter, people are choosing to civically switch off.

Example

A 2010 report found that between 40-45% of Canadians said they weren't satisfied with how democracy works and a huge majority felt that government policies had not made their lives better.

McKenney, L. (2010). Canadas shifting trust in government, decline in political participation. Retrieved from <http://www.policyinnovations.org/ideas/summaries/full/view/2010/04/08/canada-democracy-trust/>

T10

Radically Transparent City Government

Technology and the availability of information have changed citizens expectations of government. Governments are responding by increasing transparency around their processes and outcomes.

Example

The City of Charlottesville publishes their strategic plan, departmental objectives, action plans, and scorecards of performance on their website. Community members can read easy-to-understand status reports on how the city is performing.

<http://www.cityofva.com/charlottesvilleinfo/strategicplan/strategicplan.htm>

T11

Simplifying Government

Municipal governments are realizing that citizens should not need a manual to interact with them. Simplifying processes and focusing on creating user-centered services are hot on the municipal agenda.

Example

In Washington, D.C., city officials have an event series called 'Form-a-Palooza', where residents and city employees work together to simplify overly complicated government forms.

McKenney, L. (2010). How a 'Form-a-Palooza' helped Washington, D.C. Retrieved from <http://www.policyinnovations.org/ideas/summaries/full/view/2010/04/08/washington-form-a-palooza/>

T12

Crowdsourcing for Citizens

Cities are recognizing the payoff of engaging citizens as partners in solving problems and innovating. Crowdsourcing allows cities to tap into community expertise, understand needs and wants, and engage directly with residents.

Example

In Colombia, Mikeledir, has received nearly 19,000 ideas from citizens on various challenges. The website solicits solutions to problems, input on policy and decision-making, and ideas for changing or improving the city's infrastructure.

McKenney, L. (2010). How Mikeledir helped Medellín. Retrieved from <http://www.policyinnovations.org/ideas/summaries/full/view/2010/04/08/medellin-mikeledir/>

T13

Wanted: Roommate for Co-living

Rising loneliness, changing patterns of consumption, and the need for affordable housing are leading people to look for alternative housing models, such as co-living.

Example

The startup 'Common' rents co-living spaces to people from all walks of life. They design their homes with the intention to encourage residents to get to know one another.

Common.com. (2016). Co-living at Common? Available from <http://www.common.com/presskit> [Accessed 29 Aug. 2016].

T14

Digital Detox

Finding ever-so-coveted time to unplug from technology has now become a mainstream concept. From sensory deprivation businesses to personal goals, digital detox is a means of rezeroing in the midst of a constant stream of information stimulation.

Example

England launches a National Unplugging Day to promote taking a break from digital technology.

Unplug & Co. (2015). Turn off your cell. National Unplugging Day helps to get people unplugged from technology. Retrieved from <http://www.unplugandco.com/unplugging2015/> [Accessed 29 Aug. 2016].

T15

Engagement 2.0

Town halls and other age-old government tools for hearing the public's voices are getting upgraded. A wave of more imaginative practices having taken the municipal engagement world by storm, from digital engagement to citizen innovation.

Example

Mayor of New York City, Bill de Blasio sets focus of 2015 NYC BigApps competition to find solutions in the areas of affordable housing, improved public safety, and better connections between citizens with government and waste reduction.

Daly, K. (2015). Mayor sets focus on BigApps competition. Retrieved from http://www.nyc.gov/html/demarcos/pr_20150615_bigs_apps_challenge.shtml

T16

Brought to you by Big Data

Government data sets are large and unwieldy, but they also say more about citizens and residents than the most effective public engagements can gather. Cities that leverage this data have begun to show promise for people-first cities.

Example

Cities across the Civic Analytics Network, an affiliation of chief data officers from municipalities across the United States, are developing analytics models and visualization platforms to achieve Vision Zero in traffic collisions.

Govnet LLC. (2016). Analytics in City Government. Retrieved from <http://www.govnetllc.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Civic-Analytics-in-City-Government.pdf>



T11

Reporting Live from City Hall: Citizen Journalists

Municipalities are realizing the influence and power of citizen journalists, and in some cases instead of resisting the trend they are training and employing citizen journalists.

Example

In Chicago, a pool of 300 'Documenters', aged 16 to 73 and representative of the city's racial and geographical diversity, are trained and, in some instances, paid an hourly wage to attend and report on city meetings.

Strauss, C. (2013, January 11). The art of citizen journalism. Available from <http://www.documenters.org/presskit/> [Accessed 29 Aug. 2016].

T12

Human-Centered Cities

Cities are leveraging innovations in urban design to create people-friendly cities in response to a demand for a better standard of living and less of a focus on car-centric planning.

Example

The Bentway Project, in Toronto, has reclaimed unused land under an expressway to create a vibrant and flexible community space in an area of the city where spaces for gathering and connecting with neighbours are limited.

Bentway Co. (2015). Why Toronto bent? Available from <http://www.bentway.com/en/about-us> [Accessed 29 Aug. 2016].

T13

Renters Rule

Increase in purpose-built rental units are making renting the more feasible and desirable option for Millennials who have been priced out of Toronto's housing market. As renters outpace homeowners, new ways to engage this segment of residents have begun to crop up.

Example

In March 2017, the Seattle Renters' Commission, the first of its kind in the US, was established to represent renters across the city and provide input and recommendations for issues and policies concerning renters.

Seattle.gov. (2017). Seattle Renters' Commission. Retrieved from <http://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoodandcommunity/renterscommission/> [Accessed 29 Aug. 2016].

T14

Personalized Digital Engagement

People want to engage with their government in the same way they engage with other platforms - they want user-friendly, immediate, and personalized experiences. Governments are beginning to pay attention and deliver consumer-centric digital experiences.

Example

In Tel Aviv, at the age of 13, every citizen has access to a 'Digital' account. The service provides a personalized, interest, and location-based digital communication platform for citizens to hear from and engage in dialogue with their local government.

Waks, S. (2016). Tel Aviv's citizen-led, personalized city service. Retrieved from <http://www.policyinnovations.org/ideas/summaries/full/view/2016/01/28/tel-aviv-digital-account/> [Accessed 29 Aug. 2016].

T15

Gamifying Engagement

By gamifying city-planning and engagement processes, in which citizens can immediately see and understand the value of their contributions, governments are increasing public engagement.

Example

In Salem, MA, 'What's the Point?', engaged youth in city-planning discussions with a social-media based game that included competing in challenges and responding to trivia questions in exchange for earning donations for local causes.

Boyd, D. (2013). What's the Point? [Found] The Salem News. Available from http://www.salemnews.com/NewsLocal_salemwhat-its-point-1106211096853-51531093669688005511.html

T16

We're in this (city-building decision) Together

Municipalities are finding new ways to leverage community expertise and engage citizens to make better collaborative decisions.

Example

In New York City, volunteer residents, called 'Budget Delegates', turn citizen ideas into real proposals, which are voted on by residents to decide how to spend \$1,000,000 of the city's annual budget.

Participatory Budgeting. (2015). About Budget Council. Available from <http://www.budgetcouncil.org/about/> [Accessed 29 Aug. 2016].

T17

Self-Organizing Communities

Tired of waiting on city hall to make changes, communities are rallying together to self-organize to improve their neighbourhoods.

Example

Civic Tech Toronto, a self-organized and open community, meets weekly to solve civic challenges through technology, design, or other means. For example, 'DemocracyKit' is an open online platform to share advice and tech with campaign teams running for municipal office.

Communita. (2016). Civic Tech Toronto. Toronto. Available from <http://civictech.ca/> [Accessed 29 Aug. 2016].

T18

Rise of the Everyday Change Maker

Millennials have a lack of faith in institutions to drive change and instead are finding their civic voices through their everyday decisions. They believe that, collectively, these decisions - what they purchase, who they work for, and how they interact online - will lead to larger institutional change.

Example

For people who don't know where to direct their charitable donations, Shared Nation offers an alternative model to monthly donations to support organizations and causes.

<http://www.sharednation.org/>

T25

Long Arm of the Province

The limitations of municipal power become more and more obvious as provincial and federal needs impose on municipal affairs, without much mode of recourse for city council.

Example

Provincial decision to end cap-and-trade causes major disruptions in Hamilton's social housing due to a \$17 million shortfall caused by the ruling.

Maq, T. May 11, 2018. Hamilton and \$17 million social housing gap. <http://www.hamiltonnews.com/news/local-news/hamilton-social-housing-gap-17-million>. Accessed 11/27/2018. <https://www.facebook.com/hamiltonnews/>

T26

Immigration Tensions Rising

As the Federal government continues to welcome immigrants and refugees, provincial and municipal governments begin to protest, highlighting resource shortages in continued immigrant and refugee settlement efforts.

Example

Unrealistic efforts to end birthright citizenship highlight tensions in Canada's approach to immigration.

Q&A, J. Aug 27, 2018. Why tensions to end birthright citizenship? <http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/immigration-tensions-1.4819878>

T27

Push for Data Privacy

With the rise of the collection of data in daily activities, data privacy has become a hot topic. Citizens actively weigh the benefits of access to digital tools against the drawbacks of data collection.

Example

Citizens are concerned about the use of their data as online government sales of cannabis is legislated to begin in mid-October.

Graham, K. May 20, 2018. Privacy issues weigh in on cannabis sales. <http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/online-sales-cannabis-1.4799288>

T28

Citizens Demand Transparency

As freedom of information becomes a staple of our existence, people expect access to everything. Transparent processes are not just preferred, but demanded by the more civically active among us.

Example

CEO of Waterfront Toronto, Will Reitsig is asked to step down after not being forthright and transparent with Toronto residents and stakeholders.

By, J. May 4, 2018. The Star. Waterfront Toronto CEO Will Reitsig is asked to step down. <http://www.thestar.com/story/2018/05/04/waterfront-toronto-ceo-will-reitsig-to-step-down>

T29

Anti-Politician Politicians

In a world of growing distrust in governments and institutions, citizens are seeking a change. This marks the decline of the career politician perceived to be untrustworthy. A desire for change drives many new politicians' quick rise to political fame from beginnings in other industries.

Example

Donald Trump wins favour in the United States by being under-qualified as a politician and promising a non-political business-like approach to running the country.

Neal, J. May 29, 2018. Trump's rise: Business and politics. <http://www.mcgill.ca/mcgill/article/2018/05/29/trump-rises>

T30

Increase in Flexible Work Arrangements

More and more, employees are enjoying a shift away from the traditional 9 to 5 workday to more flexible schedules. Whether shifting earlier, later, or condensing hours worked, the definition of the work day is no longer standard.

Example

University of Cambridge introduces flexible work day policies.

University of Cambridge, 2018. Cambridge news. <http://www.cam.ac.uk/news/2018/05/24/flexible-work-days>

T31

Failing Street Safety

Rising incidences of accident-related cyclist and pedestrian deaths have led to concerns that Toronto streets are unsafe for residents.

Example

2018 survey finds that majority of Torontonians do not believe it's safe to cycle in Toronto.

Start, T. 2018. <http://www.toronto.ca/news/2018/05/24/survey-finds-majority-of-torontonians-do-not-believe-it-is-safe-to-cycle-in-toronto/>

T32

311 Chatbots

Chatbots, artificial intelligence systems designed to function as a participant in text-based conversations over the internet, are growing in use by governments as a means to answer resident questions.

Example

North London borough hires the first robot employee, named Amelia, in hopes that residents won't notice they're speaking with a robot when calling with questions.

Olson, W. 2018. <http://www.theguardian.com/technology/2018/may/24/robot-employee-named-amelia>

T17

Armchair Activism Upswing

Marching for a cause is no longer the only way to throw your weight behind an interest. Social media has opened a world of convenient and passive activism, coined armchair activism.

Example

Facebook releases profile picture skins which allow people to passively participate in the defense of causes like LGBT rights.

Orlando, B. May 3, 2018. Facebook releases rainbow profile picture skins. <http://www.cbc.ca/news/technology/facebook-profile-pictures-1.4819878>

T18

Bringing Engagement to Life

Why talk about a city-building decision with residents when you can have them experience it? The rise of virtual reality opens a world of possibility for collective input to new developments.

Example

Paris uses Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality to allow citizens to explore their new entertainment and leisure park before it is even built.

Smith, K. May 27, 2018. <http://www.cbc.ca/news/technology/virtual-reality-paris-1.4819878>

T19

Suburban Boom

There's no denying our cities are becoming more populous but so are our suburbs, and at a faster rate. The impenetrable housing market in major Canadian cities is fueling a workforce of commuters settling on the outskirts of major cities and creating suburban population booms.

Example

Lack of urban housing affordability drives people to settle in the suburbs of Canada's metropolitan areas.

Hicks, M. and Hancock, S. May 23, 2018. <http://www.cbc.ca/news/technology/urban-housing-affordability-1.4819878>

T20

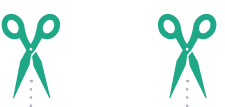
P4: Promoting Public-Private Partnership

New models of government services involve investment from the private sector. These public-private partnerships provide resources for public service that have never been available in public budgets.

Example

Ottawa puts forward a plan to attract trillions of dollars of private sector investment to build national infrastructure.

Esposito, J. May 9, 2018. <http://www.cbc.ca/news/technology/ottawa-p4-1.4819878>



T21

Social Service Waitlists Abound

For those who face barriers to accessing private services, waitlists of up to 5 years are becoming increasingly commonplace for services like daycare, elective surgery, and dentists.

Example

Toronto seniors, with low income, face a 2-year waitlist to get into a publicly-funded dental clinic.

Phillips, L. May 11, 2018. <http://www.cbc.ca/news/technology/toronto-seniors-1.4819878>

T22

Sweating from Point A to Point B

As the boundaries of our lives shrink and the convenience of sport and physical activity decreases, active transport has become the new world order. City planning is increasingly prioritizing and incentivizing active means of commuting to work.

Example

Waterloo council puts forward a plan to change zoning bylaws to encourage active transportation and reduce parking options and automobile use.

Orlitz, J. May 27, 2018. <http://www.cbc.ca/news/technology/waterloo-council-1.4819878>

T23

Power-Wielding Government

Leaders are now wielding more power than some citizens are comfortable with, making unilateral decisions that bypass due process.

Example

Hamilton council appoints a new councillor without input from citizens. Decision is met with anger and mistrust from Hamilton residents.

Strong, C. May 15, 2018. <http://www.cbc.ca/news/technology/hamilton-council-1.4819878>

T24

Decline of Trust in Government

With low civic literacy, government transparency, and political accountability, governments aren't winning much favour with those on the cusp of becoming civically engaged.

Example

Ontario's Planning for Prosperity is a symptom of low trust in government and a plan to gain it back.

Thomson, J. <http://www.thomson.com/news/2018/05/24/ontario-planning-for-prosperity>

T41

Public Engagement 101

Public engagement requires a range of skills and expertise that are not taught in school. Given the growth of public engagement initiatives, there is a growing need for public servants to learn this skill.

Example

British Columbia publishes a citizen engagement handbook for government employees.

Government of British Columbia, 2017. "Citizen Engagement in the British Columbia Public Service: A Handbook for Government Employees." https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/skilledworkforce/public_engagement/citizen_engagement_handbook.pdf

T42

Refugees Straining Toronto Social Housing Programs

The international refugee crisis has led many refugees to arrive in Toronto. With Toronto's current housing affordability issue, social housing is already taxed, and unable to support the increase in demand.

Example

87 families waiting for shelter beds in Toronto are mostly refugee claimants.

Hobbs, D., and Hughes, J. (2018). "Toronto's Urgent Shelter Crisis of Refugees." <https://www.refugeerights.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/07-2018-Toronto-Refugee-Crisis-Report.pdf>

T43

Struggling Civic Literacy

Civic literacy, meaning the ability to understand how democratic processes work, and how to participate in civic life, is critical to a healthy democracy. While there is a mandatory civics course in Ontario's curriculum, residents continue to fall behind.

Example

50% of Canadians do not know how the Prime Minister is elected.

McLurg, C. and Underage, M. (2017). "Canada Needs to Boost Civic Literacy." <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/canada-needs-to-boost-civic-literacy-1.4415114>

T44

Engaging Through Volunteerism

To meet the growing demand for authentic public engagements, cities are training and utilizing volunteer residents to facilitate interactions with their communities.

Example

Once a year, in Chicago, "On the Table" brings citizens from diverse backgrounds and neighbourhoods together. Volunteers host conversations over mealtime to explore how to make the community stronger.

Chenail, L. (2018). "On the Table: Chicago's Model of Authentic Public Engagement." <https://ontheblueline.com/>

T45

JOKER



(define your own trend)

T46


JOKER



(define your own trend)

T47


JOKER



(define your own trend)

T48

JOKER



(define your own trend)

T33

Cities Under Surveillance

Between Toronto police CCTV cameras, TTC vehicle cameras, and cameras installed by private businesses or individuals, the city is under surveillance. And yet, there are requests for more from government and business owners.

Example

Toronto police asks council to double the number of CCTV cameras across the city a proposal supported by the current Mayor.

Harris, J. and Payne, M. (2018). Toronto asked to ask city to double public cameras, install private cameras. The Globe and Mail. Retrieved 26 August 2018, from <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/toronto/news/city-proposal-to-double-cctv-cameras/article.html>

T34

Rise of Smart Cities

Cities are getting smarter through the use of new technologies which generate information on how best to manage assets and resources efficiently. The goal is to improve the quality of government services for residents.

Example

Canada's federal government launches the Smart Cities Challenge to spark municipal projects that will leverage new technologies to improve city services.

Information Canada (2017). "Government of Canada launches the Smart Cities Challenge." Retrieved August 2018, from <https://www.canada.ca/en/infocanada/2017/11/government-of-canada-launches-smart-cities-challenge.html>

T35

Digitally Literate Residents

Digital literacy, the ability to use digital technology tools and understand how they work, is increasingly important for participating in our personal and professional lives due to the pervasiveness of technology.

Example

In 2018, the City of Toronto announces its first Digital Literacy Day to celebrate digital literacy programs in the city.

Smith, D. (2018). "Toronto to Celebrate its First Digital Literacy Day on May 31." <https://www.toronto.ca/news/digital-literacy-day-2018/>

T36

Toronto the DiverCity

People from over 230 countries call Toronto home, contributing to an incredibly diverse population. In fact, more than half of Torontonians were born outside of Canada.

Example

In 2016 Toronto is named the most diverse city in the world by BBC Radio.

Rank, D. (2016). "Toronto named most diverse city in the world." <http://www.bbc.com/news/health-35701803>

T37

Rise of Non-Profit Real Estate Developers

In response to growing housing affordability issues, several non-profit organizations are forming. Their aim is to build the housing people need, with a focus on affordable rental and ownership models.

Example

Creative Housing Society pitches a plan for 50,000 affordable housing units in Toronto and Vancouver.

Byrne, D., and Bala, I. (2018). "Developer pitches plan for 50,000 units of affordable housing in Toronto, Vancouver." The Globe and Mail. Retrieved 26 August 2018, from <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/toronto/news/creative-housing-society-pitches-plan-for-50000-units-of-affordable-housing/article.html>

T38

Growing Up Vertically

In response to rising housing costs and long commutes more Toronto families are living in downtown condos.

Example

A Toronto family turns their second bathroom into a nursery to make room for their growing family in their small space.

Schwartz, A. (2018). "Toronto's tiny homes challenge an apartment crisis." <https://www.cbc.ca/news/toronto/toronto-tiny-homes-1.4811113>

T39

Expanding Mainstreet Bike Lanes

Bike lanes, once relegated to side streets, are now being built on main streets and corridors, providing new options for cyclists to get around the city.

Example

In 2018, 76% of public consultation participants want protected bike lanes on Danforth Avenue.

Noble, D. (2018). "Toronto cyclists push for 100 bike lanes on Danforth Avenue." <https://www.cbc.ca/news/toronto/toronto-cyclists-push-for-100-bike-lanes-on-danforth-avenue-1.4811113>

T40

Alternative Wheels

From bike share programs to electric skateboards, city-dwellers have more mobility options for getting around town. New options reduce reliance on public transportation or the need to own a vehicle.

Example

In 2018, New York gets the first electric moped rental program.

Yok, M. (2018). "New York's first electric moped rental program is soaring." <https://www.cbc.ca/news/technology/new-yorks-first-electric-moped-rental-program-1.4811113>



U1

Municipal Revenue Renewal

As municipalities continue to struggle with adequate funding for services, new revenue tools are being explored.

Example

In 2018, alcohol, tobacco, and amusement taxes are the only items that Toronto city council has not rejected as possible new revenue sources.

Photo: N. COYNE, Bloomberg Businessweek/Getty Images
https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-07-26/city-council-rejects-new-revenue-sources

U2

Autonomous Vehicles

Some new models of cars, trucks, and vans are now able to navigate their environment without human drivers. Called autonomous vehicles (or self-driving vehicles), these vehicles have the potential to rapidly adjust our transportation system.

Example

Traditional car companies, such as Ford Motors, jump on board with developing self-driving vehicles.

© James S. COYNE from the New York Times. All rights reserved. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/27/us/autonomous-vehicles.html>

U3

Social Side of City Building

In a society with greater access to information and consequent accountability, many city-building decisions are now being influenced by an impetus to be more inclusive and sensitive to social inequalities.

Example

Toronto city-builder takes to Twitter to critique Toronto Life Magazine's annual neighbourhood ranking, calling it "neighbourhood shaming" which ignores inequities experienced across the city.

My Name @Bee_Zweifel "I read @torontomagazine's annual neighbourhood ranking and I'm not happy. It's a form of 'neighbourhood shaming' which ignores inequities experienced across the city. @torontomagazine" 26 Sept 2018, 8:22 AM

U4

The Gig Economy

The gig economy has grown in popularity in the last five years. Noted as being flexible and a way for individuals to earn extra revenue, recent studies show that it's not all that it's cracked up to be.

Example

US looks at changing mortgage rules to support gig workers' access to mortgage.

PHOTO: ANDREW H. COYNE from the New York Times. All rights reserved. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/27/us/gig-workers-apply-for-mortgage.html>

U5

140 Languages and Counting

Toronto is currently home to a large and diverse population who speak more than 200 languages. Nearly 5% of Toronto's population are without official-language skills, meaning they are naturally excluded from much of civic life.

Example

In a Thorncliffe Park school, home to 630 students in 24 kindergarten classes there are over 40 languages spoken.

Photo: C. COYNE, Bloomberg Businessweek/Getty Images
https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-07-26/toronto-children-speak-40-languages

U6

Changing Family Composition

The composition of Canadian families is shifting. Though married couples are still the majority, they're on the decline. Same-sex couples, common law parents and couples without children are on the rise.

Example

In 2009, the Canadian Census data indicated that Canada had doubled its percentage of mothers with school-age children who were employed.

Photo: Statistics Canada. All rights reserved. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/28-001-x/2011001/article/11822-eng.htm>



Megatrends

Climate change: Changing weather patterns over longer periods of time, threatening the ecosystem we depend on.

Accelerated globalization: Increase network of integration among governments, institutions, companies and people worldwide.

Demographic changes: Shifting and more diverse populations in countries across the world.

Technological progress: Rapid proliferation of technology as a tool for progress.

Increasing urbanization: The world's population settling in and around major cities worldwide.

Migration and ethnic conflicts: Increase in immigration rates and resultant tensions.

Political shift and polarization: Changes in the makeup of national leadership and the rise of increasingly opposed political views.

Constant structural change: Increased integration among institutions and rise of collaboration.

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Rules

- The player with the longest commute to the workshop is the first dealer.
- Each player gets three Trend Cards.
- Two decks of remaining Event Cards and Trend Cards are placed in the middle of the table.
- Each round, the dealer flips one event card and players select the trend card in their hands that interacts with it.
- Each player tells a story describing the vision of the future in which their trend and the event interact.
- The dealer selects the winning vision of the future and explains the criteria that informed their choice.
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CLOSING

Engagement Matters

FINAL THOUGHTS

Engagement Matters

Public engagement is becoming more prevalent as a tool for engaging the voices that need to be included in an effective representative democracy. In Toronto, where city councillors now represent more constituents than ever before, we believe that public engagement needs to become a core competency of public servants. In building the future of Toronto, public engagement can serve to bring people together through interest-based conversations or continue to push people apart based on political positions on specific issues. Public servants play an instrumental role in determining and realizing a future that serves Torontonians.

These Volumes are intended to provide the support necessary for public servants at any level of skill or comfort to enter a conversation about the type

of public engagement Toronto needs to see. Volume 1 of this set serves to provide public servants, unfamiliar with the uses, practices, and challenges of public engagement, an understanding of the current state. Volume 2 uses strategic foresight to elevate the conversation of public engagement out of the tyranny of the now to a future-focused narrative that has the potential for transformative change. Volume 3 introduces a new opportunity for engagement that allows residents and practitioners the opportunity to explore the future and changes that government systems may face to support conversations of resilience and strategic change.

At the outset of this research, we set out to provide an output that would help define and design meaningful public engagement. The process

of conducting this research uncovered the wealth of knowledge that public engagement practitioners already possess, and how constraints beyond the influence of practitioners limit the overall success of engagement processes. This underscored a need to conceptualize public engagement at a higher level, and shifted our research focus away from the design of public engagement processes in and of themselves.

Strategic foresight launched this conversation into an exploration of the possibilities for the future of public engagement and how residents might be involved in city-building decisions. The outcome of this research is intended to provoke

new thinking about public engagement for public servants to begin the process of building a collective vision for the Toronto that residents want and need.

Although Toronto was the focus of this research, we think that much of this work can be applied to other urban contexts, as public engagement is becoming more common as a tool in cities across the country. Despite the significant challenges inherent in public engagement processes, we believe that it is a critical tool for enabling healthy democratic governance. Engagement matters. It has mattered since the beginning of democracy, and while the future is uncertain, we believe engagement will continue to matter in 2033.

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APPENDICES

Additional Resources

APPENDIX A — GLOSSARY

Affinity Mapping: A process “that gathers large amounts of language data (ideas, opinions, issues) and organizes them into groupings based on their natural relationships” (Balanced Scorecard Institute, n.d.).

Backcasting: A method of planning for the future by articulating the desired outcome(s), and the steps needed to get there over time (The Natural Step, 2018).

Citizen: The research team made a conscious decision to use the term “resident” rather than “citizen.” The term “citizen” refers to a legal designation, tied to whether a person has status as a Canadian citizen.

City Building: Entails conscious, intentional “initiatives that help communities in cities become more sustainable, integrated, inclusive, walkable, and healthy through research, education, and engagement efforts” (Ryerson City Building Institute, 2015).

Civic Engagement: A broad umbrella term that includes practices, such as voting, and other formal interactions with government.

Collective Scenarios: A participatory scenario development approach that invites traditional and non-traditional stakeholders to co-create possible futures. The process combines a foresight card game, worldbuilding, and explorative scenarios as a framework to create a set of distinct scenarios.

Design Thinking: A structured methodology for creative problem-solving.

Double Diamond Model: Developed by the UK’s Design Council, the Double Diamond is a visual representation of the design process divided into four distinct phases – Discover, Define, Develop and Deliver.

Drivers of change: Key issues and trends creating change in the world (Arup Foresight, 2018)

Ethnographic Observation: Observing, interviewing and interacting with people in their natural surroundings (Ladner, 2019).

Gamification: the process of adding games or game-like elements to something (such as a task) so as to encourage participation (Merriam-Webster, n.d.).

Generic Images of the Future: A scenario planning method, developed by Jim Dator, that is a rule-based approach to building distinct future scenarios. The four generic images are: growth, collapse, discipline and transform, which each have general rules of how drivers of change express themselves. This is a popular scenario development method used by government (Dator, 2009).

Gharajedaghi's Iterative Processes of Inquiry: This is an inquiry process to synthesize an understanding of the whole of a system by investigating the whole from multiple aspects and interrogating the interrelationships between those aspects. This process results in an understanding of the behaviour of the whole and how the interrelationships of the parts create the attributes of the whole (Gharajedaghi, 2011).

Horizon Scanning is the gathering of broad environmental information that can be used to identify possible changes.

Influence Mapping: A visualization of the flow of influence between parts of a system, for example between stakeholders or processes.

Micro-Scenarios: A brief description of how the future may unfold based on the collision of a current trend and wildcard event.

Megatrends: These are the great forces in societal development that will very likely affect the future in all areas over the next 10-15 years.

Public Engagement: Defined by the Institute for Local Government as "a general term we are using for a broad range of methods through which members of the public become more informed about and/or influence public decisions."

Resident: The research team made a conscious decision to use the term "resident" rather than "citizen." A resident is an inhabitant of a city or town. The term "citizen" more often refers to a legal designation, while in Toronto, public engagement processes are open to all residents regardless of whether they have status as a Canadian citizen.

Scenario(s): "A description of how the future may unfold according to an explicit, coherent and internally consistent set of assumptions about key relationships and driving forces." (Forward Thinking Platform, 2014).

Sensemaking: Sensemaking involves coming up with a plausible understanding — a map — of a shifting world; testing this map with others through data collection, action, and conversation; and then refining, or abandoning, the map depending on how credible it is (Ancona, 2011).

Stakeholder Analysis: Stakeholder analysis is a process or action research methodology used to explore the various opinions that different stakeholders may have on potential outcomes and their relative influence (Coghlan & Brydon-Miller, 2014).

Strategic Foresight or Foresight: Defined by Richard Slaughter as "the ability to create and maintain a high-quality, coherent and functional forward view and to use the insights arising in organisationally useful ways; for example: to detect adverse conditions, guide policy, shape strategy; to explore new markets, products and services. It represents a fusion of futures methods with those of strategic management" (Slaughter, 2002).

STEEP-V: A commonly used framework used for horizon scanning that classifies trends and signals based on the point of impact of the change: Society, Technology, Environment, Economy, Policy, and Values (Institute for Alternative Futures, 2013).

System Mapping: System mapping is a visual representation of the components of a system and their interrelationships that allows a group to share their mental models. Visualizing the system allows you to identify leverage points to create system change (Policy Horizons Canada, 2016, July 1).

Systems Thinking: “Systems thinking is a set of synergistic analytic skills used to improve the capability of identifying and understanding systems, predicting their behaviours, and devising modifications to them in order to produce desired effects. These skills work together as a system” (Arnold & Wade, 2015, p. 675).

Trend(s): A trend is the “general tendency or direction of a movement/change over time. Trends can be strong or weak, increasing, decreasing or stable. There is no guarantee that a trend observed in the past will continue in the future” (Forward Thinking Platform, 2014).

Verge: A framework for horizon scanning that classifies trends and signals based on the cultural aspects and structures where change will have the biggest impact (Lum, 2014).

Wildcard Events: “A surprising and unpredictable event, that would result in considerable impacts (or consequences) that could change the course of the future” (Forward Thinking Platform, 2014).

Worldbuilding: The creation of imaginary worlds with coherent geographical, social, cultural, and other features (Von Stackelberg & McDowell, 2015)

APPENDIX B — THE RESEARCH TEAM

Our interdisciplinary research team is made up of three graduate students in the Master of Design in Strategic Foresight and Innovation program, at OCAD University. As individuals, we bring a variety of experience from the fields of anthropology, equity studies, fundraising, health promotion, psychology, healthcare, nursing, and process improvement. Our collaborative approach to research values each of our unique skill sets. In our professional lives, we are each involved in designing and carrying out stakeholder engagements.

As residents, we care deeply about how Toronto is evolving and the role we play in shaping the future of our city. We practice and apply design thinking, systems thinking, and strategic foresight to create a deep understanding of complex problems, ensure we are investigating the right questions, and to develop innovative solutions. We are committed to a deeply human-centered approach to problem solving to ensure that the solution is focused on improving the lives of our users.

Lindsay Clarke

Lindsay is a Project Designer with the Improvement and Innovation Team at SickKids, the largest children’s hospital in Canada, where she is passionate about working collaboratively with patients, families, and staff to improve the healthcare journey. After completing her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Ryerson University in 2005, she worked in adult healthcare and spent time teaching in South Korea after which she transitioned to paediatric nursing. Since joining SickKids in 2011, Lindsay has worked in a variety of nursing and leadership roles. Lindsay firmly believes in designing with users in order to create sustainable human-centred solutions.

Jessica Thornton

Currently working as a Senior Projects Designer at the Brookfield Institute for Innovation + Entrepreneurship, Jessica uses design thinking, strategic foresight, and design research methods

to advance useful innovation policy. Previous to this, Jessica worked for almost a decade in the not for profit sector, on a range of projects, tackling housing affordability, food security, transportation accessibility, and sustainable food system development. Jessica has an Honours BA in Anthropology and Equity Studies from the University of Toronto, a Certificate in Food Security from Ryerson University, as well as a Certificate in Fundraising and Volunteer Management from George Brown College.

Ayana Webb

Ayana is a process designer and facilitator who uses anti-oppressive practices in her work. She believes that complex problems can be addressed with the right tools, processes, and engagements, using an array of co-design and systems thinking methods in her work with stakeholders to develop solutions and strategies for complex social issues. Ayana engages people of all ages, with a special focus on youth and postsecondary populations. She holds an Honours BSc from the University of Toronto and a Certificate of Human Resources from Ryerson University. She is in the process of completing a Master of Design in Strategic Foresight & Innovation from OCAD University while lending her talents to designing a health strategy at the University of Toronto.

APPENDIX C — PRIMARY RESEARCH TOOLS

Ethnographic Observation Template

AEIOU Framework adapted from Hanington & Martin (2012).

Event Details	
Name of event:	Event Description:
Date:	General description of the event.
Time:	
Location:	
Observations	
<p>A — Activities are goal directed sets of actions-things which people want to accomplish. What are the pathways that people take toward the things they want to accomplish, including specific actions and processes? How long do they spend doing something? Who are they doing it with?</p>	
General Impressions/ Observations	
Elements, Features, Special Notes	
Summary of Activities	
<p>E — Environments include the entire arena where activities take place. For example, what describes the atmosphere and function of the context, including individual and shared spaces?</p>	
General Impressions/ Observations	
Elements, Features, Special Notes	
<p>I — Interactions are between a person and someone or something else, and are the building blocks of activities. What is the nature of routine and special interactions between people, between people and objects in their environment, and across distances?</p>	
General Impressions/ Observations	
Elements, Features, Special Notes	
<p>O — Objects are building blocks of the environment, key elements sometimes put to complex or unintended uses, changing their function, meaning and context. For example, what are the objects and devices people have in their environments, and how do these relate to their activities?</p>	
General Impressions/ Observations	
Key Objects	
<p>U — Users are the consumers, the people providing the behaviors, preferences and needs. Who is present? What are their roles and relationships? What are their values and prejudices?</p>	
General Impressions	
Inventory of People	
Users in Context	

Expert Interview Guide

The following guide was used to conduct semi-structured expert interviews.

Introductions

Hello, my name is _____. Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. Our conversation should last no longer than 60 minutes. During this interview, we will discuss the most critical emerging trends related to your work and your industry. All of the following questions pertain to your role as an expert in this area. Please try to reply from your professional perspective.

Interviewer to revisit contents of the Interview Participant Consent Form.

Do you have any questions before we begin? Allow interviewee to ask questions.

Semi-Structured Interview Questions

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. What is your name, your position at your organization, and the name of your organization? | In your experience, have you encountered unexpected outcomes of public engagement processes? |
| 2. Can you provide a brief description of what your organization does and your role at the organization? | 8. What are the limitations/ constraints of using the data/outcomes from public engagements? |
| 3. What is your professional experience with public engagement? | 9. During public engagement planning how are emerging social, political and economic trends anticipated? |
| 4. In your professional opinion, what factors contribute to a successful public engagement? Can you give us an example of a successful public engagement process? | 10. What Social, Technological, Economic, Environmental, Political, and Values-based trends are influencing public engagement? |
| 5. What factors contribute to an unsuccessful public engagement? Can you give us an example of an unsuccessful public engagement process? | 11. In your professional opinion, what is meaningful public engagement? |
| 6. What are current challenges that your industry/profession faces with public engagement? How do you mitigate them? | |
| 7. How have you seen public engagement findings used? | |

Clarifying Questions

1. Why is that?
2. Can you expand on that?
3. Can you provide any additional details or examples?

Closing

Thank you for participating in this interview.

Insider Interview Guide

The following interview guide was used to conduct insider interviews for this project. Insider interviews were conducted with experts who indicated they wanted the opportunity to speak their expert position and wanted their data to remain anonymous.

Introductions

Hello, my name is _____. Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. Our conversation should last no longer than 60 minutes. During this interview, we will discuss your personal take on the planning and use of public engagement processes.

Interviewer to revisit contents of the Interview Participant Consent Form.

Do you have any questions before we begin? Allow interviewee to ask questions.

Semi-Structured Interview Questions

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. What is your personal experience with public engagement? | 7. Does everyone involved (meaning those who plan, deliver, pay for and participate in) have a common understanding of the purpose of public engagements? |
| 2. What are common attitudes towards public engagement? | 8. What would meaningful public engagement look like to you? |
| 3. In your personal opinion, what informs the decision to hold a public engagement? | 9. How do public engagements need to change, and what is it going to take to drive this change? |
| 4. What, if any, are your personal challenges with public engagement? | |
| 5. Are you satisfied with how public engagement findings are used? Why or why not? | |
| 6. Who do you think public engagements serve? Who is left out? | |

Clarifying Questions

1. Why is that?
2. Can you expand on that?
3. Can you provide any additional details or examples?

Closing

Thank you for participating in this interview.

User Interview Guide

The following interview guide was used to conduct the user interviews for this project. Users are residents in the City of Toronto who have or have not participated in public engagement processes.

Introductions

Hello, my name is _____. Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. Our conversation should last no longer than 60 minutes. During this interview, we will discuss your experience with public engagement processes in the City of Toronto.

Interviewer to revisit contents of the Interview Participant Consent Form.

Do you have any questions before we begin? Allow interviewee to ask questions.

Semi-Structured Interview Questions

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. What does public engagement mean to you? | Prompt: What role should people play? |
| 2. Can you tell me about your experience with public engagement? | 6. Have you seen positive change as a result of public engagement? What was the outcome? |
| Prompt: Tell me more about your experience. | 7. What would meaningful engagement look like to you? |
| Prompt: Have you participated? | |

3. Why do you/don't you participate?

4. How do you think public engagement influences decision? Why?

5. What role do people play in city-building decisions?

Clarifying Questions

1. Why is that?
2. Can you expand on that?
3. Can you provide any additional details or examples?

Closing

Thank you for participating in this interview.

APPENDIX D — ETHNOGRAPHIC OBSERVATION DATA

Event	Type of Event	IAP2 Category	Day of the Week							Timing		Pre-Registration Required	Handouts/Takeaways
			Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Day (12pm to 6pm)	Evening (6pm-10pm)		
Sidewalk Toronto Public Roundtable #1	P	Inform		X							X	X	
Sidewalk Toronto Public Roundtable #2	OH, R	Inform				X					X	X	X
Public Consultation on New Dust Control Measures	PM	Consult		X							X		
Resilient TO Part 2: Creating Inclusive, Climate-Resilient Growth	P	Inform, Involve			X						X	X	X
Community Input on Canada's Drug Policy	CD	Inform, Consult, Involve				X					X	X	X
Baby Point Heritage Conservation District Study	OH	Inform	X								X		X
Open Table Conversation: CSI's Demographic Survey	OT	Consult, Involve		X							X	X	X
Second Units - Draft Official Plan Amendment	OH	Inform, Consult		X							X		
TTC Open House: Easier Access Construction Update	OH	Inform			X						X		X
307 Open Sidewalk #1	OH	Inform							X	X			
Metrolinx Online Townhall	T	Inform				X					X		
Richmond-Adelaide Cycle Track - Public Drop-In Event	PM	Inform, Consult	X								X	X	
Community Consultation on Portlands Flood Protection	PM	Inform, Engage			X						X		X

